Interview with Kempton B. Jenkins

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

KEMPTON B. JENKINS

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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Q: Today is February 23, 1995. This is an interview with Kempton B. Jenkins, on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies, and I am Charles Stuart Kennedy. Could we start with when, where you were born and a bit about your family?

JENKINS: I was born in 1926 in Florida where my father was a contractor on the Tamiami Trail. But we were only there for about six months or so before Florida went bankrupt, an interesting parallel to the District of Columbia today as we talk here. And my father and mother moved back to Long Island which was their home and where I grew up until World War II started December 7, 1941 when my father, on the occasion of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, rushed down to the Army Engineers and signed up and accepted a commission even though he was 45 years old. So we moved around a great deal during the war and I went to three different high schools when he was going from one engineer post to another, mostly building plants for the defense effort, and he would be in charge of the Army's oversight of the civilian contracts.

In 1944 I went in the Navy Officers Training Program, called V-5, and they shipped me off to Bowling Green in Ohio, which is where we were in Cincinnati at the time. And my main memories of those four semesters in the Navy at Bowling Green, as a midshipman, was

essentially playing basketball for the Bowling Green team which ranked number two in the country that year. I met my wife-to-be there, and went off to Notre Dame for four months, and then off to Alameda Naval Air Station when the war ended. I returned to Bowling Green and finished there.

Q: Did you have any particular major while you were at Bowling Green?

JENKINS: While I was there in the Navy I was taking all kinds of things like thermodynamics, navigation, etc. When I came back I switched to history and political science. My professors urged me to think about taking the Foreign Service exam, which I did upon graduation.

Q: You graduated in 1948?

JENKINS: In 1948. I came to Washington, took the exam. I took this little cram course at GW, which David Dean and several others of us took at the time, and finished my Master's and went into the State Department on the 1st of May 1950. It was approximately a week later, I think, that Joe McCarthy made his speech in Wheeling, West Virginia, saying, “I have here in my hand the names of 57 communists in the State Department.” All hell broke loose. I was in Public Affairs, a section of the State Department in those days, on temporary assignment waiting for my FSO commission, and spent all of my time working on the McCarthy issue. Acheson was the Secretary, Marshall Shulman was his special assistant, and I was sort of the errand boy for Marshall.

Q: When you say working on, what did that mean?

JENKINS: Well, we were doing statements, interviews with the new television media, for example, and the radio, and helping Acheson with press statements and office memos and that sort of thing. Carl Humelsine and Jim Webb were the top management for the Department. The most dramatic thing that I can remember is the discovery that Roy Cohn

was a practicing homosexual which somehow the FBI, or the U.S. government picked up that information.

Q: He was Senator McCarthy's press...

JENKINS: He was Senator McCarthy's staff aide on the hearings on the State Department. Again, I was a junior officer in all this. Humelsine made an appointment to meet with McCarthy and confront him with this information with the idea that McCarthy would back off because he really never did have that list and there never were those names. The whole thing was a canard. But the assumption was that McCarthy would back off because in those days it was a great embarrassment for this tough “anti-communist” who among other things accused the Department of “harboring homosexuals,” and it turns out that his staffer is queer—that is the language we used in those years.

Q: The idea being that anybody in that position was automatically a security risk because they could be blackmailed.

JENKINS: Yes. Upon arrival for the meeting with McCarthy, he laid on the table—and I was not at that meeting personally, but I had helped prepare for it, and was present in the debriefing of Humelsine when he came back—a dossier on Sumner Welles who had been picked up by the police in Thomas Circle for “molesting a child.” So the two sides agreed to swap those pieces of information and drop them. And that's what happened.

Q: They both became rather renowned. Sumner Welles, in later years, there were lots of stories that came out, and Cohn and Schine were sort of the gay boys flitting around Europe. It was a ridiculous period.

JENKINS: It was a very bizarre entrance into the Foreign Service. As the result of that I came in with the same attitude, I think, my entire generation had, somewhat cynical. It was an awe-inspiring period in our history. We arrived all starry eyed and gung ho to make a contribution to the new world. It was only a few years after the end of the war,

and we were greeted by this terribly cynical distortion of reality, and which dominated everybody's attention. And the senior officials in government, and Congress including Senator Taft for example, behaved terribly, and they were cowards in the face of this situation—McCarthyism. So we became, I think my entire generation of Foreign Service officers, somewhat jaded about being able to rely on political figures, and jaded about the Hill, which is interesting because I ended up running H in the State Department later on. But the contrast was very sad and upsetting to us.

When I was studying at George Washington, I used to use the library that belonged to the Carnegie endowment, which is now a piece of the Blair House right on the corner, kitty-corner from the White House. And at that point the Truman balcony was being built, and Truman lived in Blair House.

Q: This is the Truman balcony on the White House.

JENKINS: Yes. And each day I would be in this board room poring over books for my graduate papers, etc., and roughly at noon or 12:15 or so each day, the President would walk from the White House, wait for the light, one security policeman with him, walk across the street under the little bay window that still hangs out over Pennsylvania Avenue, tip his hat to us because we were always in the window, and we would wave to him, and he would walk into Blair House for lunch, and then he'd walk back. And each day he'd have either Dean Acheson, or Cap Krug, or Jim Forrestal with him. So we were watching history unfold. It was very exciting, and very inspirational for a young Foreign Service officer.

Q: Tell me on this McCarthy thing, there was nothing like sort of a wide eyed look at something when you're first in an organization and you're young. Were you sharing this with other Foreign Service officers?

JENKINS: Oh, yes. We were all talking openly about it. While we all shared the awe that I sensed in this little story, which should have been the whole thing, was being counter undermined by this really very gross performance by the executive branch, including

Truman eventually who kept trying to cut a deal with McCarthy to get him to knock it off, instead of confronting him and slapping him down. It carried over into the Eisenhower period. We were all very disappointed in Eisenhower who had the prestige nationally to slap McCarthy down. He knew McCarthy was a fraud. But he went out and campaigned for him in Wisconsin after McCarthy had denounced General Marshall as a traitor.

Q: "A knowing front for traitors," I think.

JENKINS: I think that was the phrase. But it made us all somewhat less than enthusiastic about the Eisenhower administration. And, of course, I was in the building when Dulles made his famous speech to the assembled employees of the State Department on arrival, and he reassured us that he knew that most of us were loyal. Which was an incredible thing. So the Eisenhower administration did not start out as a very popular organization for us.

Q: You came in in 1950?

JENKINS: 1950, and I was hired on a temporary job as an FSO eligible, they called us, waiting for my commission to be approved. I had this very interesting temporary job with Marshall Shulman at that time, and then my commission came up and I went off to Germany in the spring of '51.

Q: Let's talk about Marshall Shulman a bit. What was his background, and how did he operate?

JENKINS: He was an academic, I don't recall exactly where he came from, but he was doing speech writing and general specialist work for the Secretary. And because of the onslaught against the Department, in connection with McCarthyism, he was really focusing on defending the State Department and Secretary Acheson, and I was sort of an errand boy for him, which allowed me to see a lot, and I got to write some things, etc. I did all kinds of odd jobs, trying to make appointments with CBS for a radio show. One of the

first TV programs on Sunday Public Affairs programs, the State Department put together a program called, “The Diplomatic Pouch.” It featured talks with important American ambassadors and senior Department officials.

A funny thing happened in that period. Not long after I got to the State Department, Paul Smith, a friend of mine who took the cram course with me, and subsequently became a Foreign Service officer as well, and our wives, went down to the Chesapeake Bay for a beer party. When we got there we decided we didn't like the party very much, there were jelly fish in the bay so you couldn't swim, so we decided we'd figure out an excuse—we were both in these temporary jobs in the State Department. We told our host that, “We have to leave. We've just been called back to the Department for a special emergency.” We didn't have anything in mind, we were just getting out of there the best we could. Driving back with the radio on, we heard the announcement that the North Koreans had invaded South Korea. So everybody at that party thought we were terribly important. It was just a fluke. But that was an interesting time.

Q: Looking at it then, and then subsequently, dealing with McCarthyism, was it just that the State Department didn't know how to deal with this, or just wasn't getting the backing of the administration?

JENKINS: It was an unprecedented experience for the institution, and for the people in the institution. On the whole I think the professionals in the State Department responded well. Nobly they banned together and they refused to kowtow. The political appointees at the upper levels, were trying to deal with it through manipulating their relationship with Congress somehow. And there was this sense that we'd won the war; there was a letdown that followed, and this conspiracy concept of communism gripped the country. And it was fueled by McCarthy. It was considered a threat to our very society. Truman initially also didn't quite know what to do about it. And when Eisenhower came into office an awful lot of people who were attacking so-called Marxist-Leninist elements within the government, came to positions of authority. Several senior people in the Department were appointed.

Bill Knowland's deputy from the Oakland Journal, or whatever it was, became Counselor of the Department. And we had a man who arrived out in Bangkok as DCM who was Senator Styles Bridges' aide. Styles Bridges was a big McCarthy supporter.

Q: He was a senator from New Hampshire.

JENKINS: It took really almost a decade for the country to come together, and recognize this was all wrong. Margaret Chase Smith of Maine, and Watkins of Utah, were two heroes who finally stood up and called a spade a spade. And once somebody did that, all of the other members felt they had cover and they fell in behind them. But Eisenhower should have taken that step. He had the authority and responsibility to do it, and had the national prestige to do it. But he just stayed away from the issue which I thought was pretty disgraceful.

Q: I always felt so too.

JENKINS: Then you had, of course, the crisis which erupted when Truman fired MacArthur at the same time, and MacArthur came back and barnstormed the country. I just saw an old rerun of “Seven Days in May,” which revived the mood all over again.

Q: But it didn't work.

JENKINS: It didn't work.

Q: Your commission came through...

JENKINS: ...and we sailed for Germany.

Q: When?

JENKINS: March, 1951.

Q: I like to get the dates, you were in Germany from when to when?

JENKINS: '51 until June of '54, the first time. I was in Munich for a year, in the visa section. It was fun being in Bavaria but the responsibility of the job was not much.

Q: Was there much visa work then?

JENKINS: No. I was in the displaced persons program. We were trying to help the waves of emigration out of the collapsed European economy into the United States. It was a good program, it needed to be done, but the processing was duplicative, and I witnessed for the first time the role and influence of ethnic minority groups in the United States. The Baltic SS divisions, e.g., which were brutal, came forward as displaced persons because the Baltic Americans were organized and were supported by the Lutheran church in this country. They were not only allowed to come to the United States, their trip was subsidized, and they were placed in jobs when they got here. Some of them were pretty bad people. We saw Vlasov's army, the Russian-American community in this country helped them, and the joint Jewish group was trying to help the remnants of the Jewish community of Europe to get to the United States. So you had terrible anguishing experiences, and I, under the law, was forced to turn down a Jewish survivor who wanted to come to the United States because he had been convicted in a German court during the Nazi period of stealing firewood. Well that's a crime “involving moral turpitude” in the way the law was written. That man was excludable, while at the same time I was supposed, I didn't, but I was told to process the papers for an SS colonel who was a Volksdeutsch, a German resident in Latvia in one of the SS divisions. The law did the job in a macabre sense, but there were many instances of individual tragedies.

Q: I ended up in the Refugee Relief Program which sort of cleaned up. One thing that it did do was to certainly give us all a feeling for not only the ethnic diversity of Europe, but also the ethnic hatreds and tensions.

JENKINS: Oh, yes, that was very clear and we had lots of personal experiences with that. Anyhow, it was not a happy job for me, and it didn't require a lot of background or understanding. There was not much judgment involved, the law was really cut and dried. But I learned a lot through osmosis, I guess, as you suggest, about the tragedy—the depth of the tragedy which the war visited upon the European populations.

Q: That was for a year?

JENKINS: I was meant to go into the passport section of the consulate and I was dreading that because that was even more depressing. When I went to the Consul General, Sam Woods, who was a political appointee, he had been in commerce for a while, and his wife was the heiress to the German part of the Anheuser-Busch (her name was Minnie Busch). He was not a very inspiring Consul General for starry-eyed young officers. I announced that I wanted to go to Frankfurt to see Mr. McCloy, who was then the High Commissioner, to see if I could get a position in the High Commission offices in the British zone. They were opening American offices in Hamburg, Hannover and Bremen. Woods didn't like the fact that I wanted to leave Munich and his consulate general, but he acquiesced, and I went to Frankfurt to meet a man named Elmer Lower who subsequently became head of Mutual Broadcasting, and talked my way into being appointed as an information officer in Hannover in Lower Saxony, in the British zone. I arrived there with three other people. Someone who did the exchanges program, somebody did Cultural Affairs and ran the library, and myself. I had a budget, I had a quota to pick promising young Germans in the immediate area and send them to the United States for the exchange program. I had eight Volkswagen buses, a hundred film projectors, and a library of 2,000 documentary films about democracy in the United States, and elections, and all that sort of thing. I hired four local employees and we took off. I went all over Lower Saxony organizing committees to use these projectors, training them on how to use them. I did a speaking tour about the Stevenson-Eisenhower election, and I worked with what became the core of the new German army, the Grenzpolizei they were called, border protection, border police. I spoke

at each one of their camps and headquarters about the electoral process. This was all in German. It was great training for my language being immersed in that at the age of 25 when your ear is still flexible. I came out with very good German which to this day I still retain. It was an interesting time because these young Germans and their officers who were former officers would attack me in these public forums where I was talking about elections, etc., for not supporting them and trying to overthrow communism. It was a very interesting challenging experience.

I then moved up to Hamburg for a year and continued to do the same sort of work. Among other things we licensed and subsidized the new German press. We founded a magazine based on Time called Der Spiegel, which still continues, a somewhat scurrilous journal these days and more like People magazine than like Time used to be. But for somebody 26-27 years old it was a lot of management experience. I had my own budget to submit, I controlled my own budget, and I had personnel whom I hired (they were all very well educated), very attractive young Germans. Two of them went on to become members of the Bundestag, congressmen in Germany. I played on the German tennis team in Hannover which was fun, the DTV club, where I was playing with two Davis cup players, and that was a lot of fun.

In Hamburg we continued that. I used tennis throughout the Foreign Service as a great entree because it was a way of getting into the local community. I joined the club in Hamburg as well. I was always able to play on the club team, we traveled and played other clubs and it was a very good way of insinuating myself into the society.

Q: What was your impression of the receptivity? Here you are 26, we have these films which...

JENKINS: National Geographic types of feature films, not heavy propaganda. They were real documentaries from our own school system.

Q: How were they received?

JENKINS: I had thought it would be pretty arrogant for us, the United States, to send somebody my age to lecture to German school teachers. At the end of the war, this was 1950, five years after the war is over, the Germans were so numb by what they had been through, and they were so psychologically paralyzed by a tremendous sense of guilt, and of defensiveness, and if there had been the opportunity to be a high-priced psychiatrist in Germany, you could have made millions of dollars. The whole country was a basket case. So they were looking for something, anything to indicate that they were acceptable as human beings. They found us generally, and not just myself, but all of my colleagues had this same experience, encouraging that we were prepared to listen to them. We had an assumption that if they had been bad, they'd have been sent to jail, which was a bit naive but on the whole the worst offenders were in fact separated out from the society. And our willingness to deal with them, to provide them with things like sound film projectors, which were unknown in Germany...I mean nobody was driving cars, the country was on a bicycle. And food was short. We had materiel to give them, we had the language, we were not the occupiers, we became the partners. And we had trips to the United States, and we were flooding the United States with people from Germany. I had 140 people a year that I could send for up to a year to the United States in my own district, Lower Saxony. I think we all felt that we were succeeding, and I think history would confirm that fact.

We hit them at a psychologically disarmed time. I know if you go to Germany today you don't get that kind of a reaction to a 26 year old diplomat. But we were perceived as something special. It wasn't arduous but we benefited from it, and I liked the fact that we took full advantage of it.

Q: How did you find the...

JENKINS: I might say it was a great experience in contrast to a stultifying experience of stamping visas and going into the passport division, which most young Foreign Service

officers in those days had to do...we were given tremendous management responsibilities, we designed our own programs, we were dealing with high level people in the government very early on, and it trained me. I like to think I'm a good manager, I spent ten years after the Foreign Service in a major steel corporation as a manager and a corporate vice president, and I ran big programs in the government in my last 15 years, and I think I did it successfully. And the reason I was able to do that was...I don't think managers are born, you learn it the old fashioned way. And when I was young, and very impressionable, I had to shape myself and my attitudes for the first working experience of any significance was in big management; responsibilities where I was clearly over my head, on paper at least, but it worked out well because I was enthusiastic and I had the language, and the audience was very receptive. And that stood me in very good stead from then on throughout the Service, and into my private sector career afterwards.

Q: We're talking about a time when being a German was not a plus in the United States. I mean there were still lots of feelings left over from the war. You were sending these I assume young Germans...

JENKINS: We had a lot of middle-aged teachers, 35-40 years old, in those days in Germany it was middle age.

Q: What was their experience?

JENKINS: When they came over here? Well, interestingly enough we recognized early on that the selection process was critical and to choose the right people. And secondly, the follow-up was even more critical. So we did stay in touch with them when they came back. And therefore I am in a position to answer your question. The programs that are run now by A.I.D. and USIA, there's damn little follow-up. It's all contracted out to non-governmental organizations, and we don't have any government follow-up and I think it suffers. But in those days we did have the follow-up. On the whole an overwhelming majority of them came back very, very positive. Americans in those days, and still today I

believe, are awfully forgiving. And these were people who were too young during the Nazi period to ever have had any significant positions. And they were clearly stuck with it. They didn't create the problem, and I think most Americans reacted that way to them. They went with great trepidation, and I think they were astounded at the receptivity and hospitality they found.

I might say that one of the interesting experiences I had in those years, and subsequently when I went back to Germany in 1958, I met dozens of Germans who would come up to me in restaurants, and say, “You're an American aren't you? I just want to thank you and your country. I was a POW in the United States during the war, they were the best ten months of my life.” The Army, very intelligently, took those POWs and put them to work doing constructive things, gave them opportunities for education. In fact, treated them almost like visitors. There were some exceptions to that, but on the whole I never met a former POW in the United States who did not, on balance at least, consider it a plus. Most of them were very enthusiastic, and very pro-American.

Q: I was there in '55 and it was very hard for me to relate to Germans who'd wax enthusiastic about Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, because that's where most of our camps were, and I was thinking, particularly in those days, those were the pits. They would come out with these names, oh boy, I was in Meridian, Mississippi, oh wow!

JENKINS: Coming from what they were coming from it was very comfortable. But anyhow, I think it's a period in our history of which we can be very proud, and I feel very blessed to have been part of it at a very young age, and I benefited from the experience tremendously.

Q: You mentioned you were back in Washington when Dulles made his speech. So that must have been '53ish.

JENKINS: Right. I came back in '54, I don't remember, dates are a little jumbled.

Q: He came in and probably would have come on January 20th or thereabouts of '53, because that's when Eisenhower was elected.

JENKINS: I think that's right. For some reason I was there—I don't think I came back in those first four years, but I may have done. But I remember the new State Department building was being built and everybody stood out in the construction area, which at that point was a flat dirt field, and he spoke from a little temporary wooden platform.

Q: Was this when he talked about positive loyalty?

JENKINS: Precisely. It had a very bad impact on all of us. I did come back in '54 for home leave. My late wife was from Lake Bluff, outside Chicago, a very conservative part of the country in those days, and we were really embarrassed because old friends of her family wouldn't receive us because I was in the State Department. That's how poisoned the atmosphere was at this McCarthy situation.

From Hamburg, which I enjoyed tremendously...we had a very impressive cadre of people there, Spike Dubs who was murdered in Afghanistan, where he was our ambassador; Bruce Laingen, who was our chief hostage, whom you know; and Frank Meehan who became ambassador in East Berlin, Czechoslovakia and Poland. All four of us were there together. You can understand why I was so proud of the Foreign Service because to me this was average. They were splendid men. To this day Bruce is a close friend of mine.

Q: Where is Frank Meehan now?

JENKINS: He's in Scotland, he's retired, his wife is Scottish.

Q: Did you feel any particular hand of the American military then?

JENKINS: No. The American military at that point...mind you, this was after the High Commission had been established, we got there virtually as McCloy took over as High

Commissioner. The military occupation was, by definition at that point, ended. There were a lot of military around, we had a lot of troops and a lot of bases. Originally, we were recruited to replace the military governors at the Kreis, or county level.

Q: Called Kreis Resident Office.

JENKINS: And I was pulled off, along with 12 others, Allen James, myself, Orme Wilson, Bruce Laingen, Pete Day, because we were FSOs. And out of this group of 45 whom they had selected to do this, 12 of us were FSOs, and the minute we were commissioned, which happened while we were over there—soon after we got there—we were jerked out of the resident officer program, and put into the consulates to do the DP work. That was also a crisis because the law ran out on the 1st of January in 1952, and they had to process all these people, and get these camps cleaned up. We had to do what we were told, so they did that to us. And then the others who had gone over with us, and trained with us for three months, were able to remain as Kreis officers which was wonderful, a civilianized military governor of a German county, and they were doing all this film and exchange programs which I talked about when I went to Hannover. So it was an interesting period. Our attitude toward the military at that time was not very high. Most of the people who were over there were draftees who came in after the war was over, they didn't want to be there, there was a lot of black-marketing, and they didn't do their job well, they didn't have any language. We all arrived with German, 3-3 level at that point, and some a lot better than that, dedicated to a much higher standard of performance, and so we looked down our noses at these people. Now, there were plenty of wonderful officers who were there but we're talking about a half million troops. The Germans tolerated it, they weren't angry about it, but they didn't respect them very much. They did respect us because we came in able to converse in their language.

Well the natural sort of backwash after a war, the people then end up in the military because the draft is still going on. They weren't highly motivated, they weren't carefully selected, and they weren't terribly good. But I think it's totally explainable. I don't think

their behavior was a disgrace or anything, it just wasn't very...and we felt fairly elite about ourselves and what we were doing in the company of Spike Dubs, Frank Meehan and people like that. You can see why I felt elite.

Q: While you were there did you get involved with looking at the various parties? I mean you had your two basic parties, the SPD and the CDU. They were both arising out of...

JENKINS: We were promoting a two-party system basically.

Q: How about with the SPD? The CDU we were obviously more comfortable with.

JENKINS: The SPD man, Shumacher.

Q: Were we comfortable with him?

JENKINS: I think the High Commissioner, who was McCloy and followed by James Conant from Harvard, the headquarters were uncomfortable with Shumacher clearly because he was an ideological socialist, and he was a hard tough nut. But when we were dealing with the local SPD (Lower Saxony was ruled by the SPD), we found them very pro-American, very internationalist. They didn't reflect the old school of Shumacher. They were enlightened. It was becoming the party of Willy Brandt, the youth group, the Falcon youth group, was among the best in terms of using our film projectors and being interested in organizing local elections, getting people to the polls, all that kind of participative democracy which was one of our objectives. The SPD was very cooperative. We had a little bit more trouble with the conservatives. There were some Catholic bishops in West Germany at that time who had collaborated in the Hitler period and were more reactionary. Bavaria was more conservative than Lower Saxony. So being in Lower Saxony I didn't run into a lot of the conservative ingredient. But on the fringes were the extremist nationalist parties. They never rose above 5-6-7%, but I had every county in Lower Saxony on a big map in my office and on each one I had the percentages of the parties in the election. And where the reactionaries did the best, and they were neo-Nazis, that's where I put my

principal efforts to try and strengthen the local newspapers, send people to the United States for training, set up film programs there, work with the SPD and the CDU people and try to contain extremism.

Q: When you say strengthen the local newspaper, what does that mean?

JENKINS: It meant giving them subsidies so they could buy more news print, sending a foreign affairs editor to the United States for three months, making sure they got the material which we sent out. We had a wireless file, and we ran a newspaper called Die Neue Zeitung, which was probably the best paper in German history, patterned after the New York Times, but a hell of a lot more objective than even the Times, and a lot of former newspapermen from the New York Times, Washington Post, and others, were in fact in Germany working. The editor of DNZ was a German-American who had come to the Times. And we had a monthly magazine called the Der Monat, which was a combination Foreign Affairs-Harpers opinion magazine which was very well respected. So we got right into the middle of it, and when TV began, the television station for Hamburg, Hannover and Bremen, we helped provide them with training people and subsidized some of the equipment. Our objective was to create a participative democracy in Germany.

Q: How did you view on the one side the neo-Nazis, and the other side the communists cadre in your area?

JENKINS: Well, the communists in our area (we were sort of on the border with the Russians), never were a significant factor. They were rather like the American communist party. Historically, of course, that was quite different and many of the old-line socialists, Schumacher, had in fact come out of the communist party in Germany. But that was all ancient history really. The only threat that we saw to a viable democracy was on the right. I never felt, and I don't think any of us ever felt that it was likely to succeed, but it certainly could cause problems. We would go to rallies of refugees from East Prussia, for example, and they were very nationalistic. They had a lot of the old Nazi symbols without

the swastika. And those speeches were scary, and to be in that place was reminiscent of what it was like to be in Nazi Germany. But they were rare, and they didn't represent ever more than 3-4-5% of the population.

Q: By that time would you say control had been passed to the Germans? While you were observing it, it wasn't as though you had a whistle and bring the police in.

JENKINS: You're absolutely right. We had no governing authority. All our influence was really based on close working relationships with the local population. As a group the resident officers in the American zone, and all of us in the British zone, I think, did a very good job.

Q: That was a fascinating time.

JENKINS: Very stimulating.

Q: You left there in 1954?

JENKINS: '54, came home on leave, ran into this terrible McCarthy-like atmosphere in Lake Forest and Lake Bluff. I was assigned to Bangkok. I had asked for Budapest, but I was assigned to Bangkok (for no apparent reason).* * * * *

Q: Today is 25th of May, 1995, and this is a make-up interview with Jenks Jenkins. I suppose what we really should do is what? Cover Bangkok?

JENKINS: Yes, I think that's what is missing. I don't think there was anything else missing.

Q: You were in Bangkok from when to when?

JENKINS: '54 to '56.

Q: All right. Why don't we just go through Bangkok. You've got some points to make, don't you?

JENKINS: Yes. I've brought some things along.

Q: All right. Why don't I turn it over to you.

JENKINS: I was a fish out of water in Bangkok. I'd spent five years in Germany. I had put in for transfer to either Budapest or Prague, and ended up getting orders to Bangkok to my amazement. In those days, as it should be even today, when you're sent to somewhere, that's where you go if you're a Foreign Service officer. So to me it was a cultural shock certainly arriving after the relatively comfortable years in Germany, with one young child, and our Airedale, in Bangkok, and being met by the heat of summer, living in a very inadequate little sort of rooming house until we were able to find a house. Then moving in and setting up housekeeping. It was the real Foreign Service as opposed to the occupation world that we lived in in Germany.

We quickly became enamored of the people in Thailand who had great charm and grace. Also quickly became involved in the politics and economics of the situation, and proceeded to spend two fascinating years in an area which was the center of things at that stage. Dien Bien Phu had just collapsed...

Q: You're talking about Dien Bien Phu in...

JENKINS: ...were defeated definitively by the Viet Minh. And the French were busily engaged in disengaging but trying to make sure that we didn't go in and pick up the pieces and “succeed” where they'd failed. Our relations with the French were not good at that time because we were beginning to move out into relations in their empire, and they did not like it. It made for a very interesting political setting. Dulles had argued in favor of intervention in Dien Bien Phu, but had been overruled by President Eisenhower. As a fall back position we organized an Asian counterpart to NATO, called SEATO, which included

Thailand, Malaysia—then Malaya—and Pakistan, the Philippines, United States, Great Britain, France, Australia and New Zealand. Rather Jerry-built in terms of its political logic, but it was typical of many things we did, and I guess still do; to confuse activity for action. There were a lot of meetings and conferences.

One of the early responsibilities I had was to sit in on the SEATO formation conference, together with our allies in all these countries. We designed the basic documents for SEATO, drawing heavily on the NATO documents. I worked particularly on the economic and cultural papers. Then, we wrote the constitution for SEATO. None of us were terribly convinced that it was going to do what Dulles intended it to do.

Now, mind you, this was shortly after the arrival of the Eisenhower administration, the integration into the Foreign Service at the top level of several conservative, politically correct figures, in which Dulles, who was very suspicious of the Foreign Service, tried to lard the Foreign Service with people who would be more sympathetic to his policies, and less “liberal.” We had several senior officers assigned to the Bangkok embassy, former aides to conservative senators and congressmen, and ex-FBI agents, and so forth, all of whom had sort of made their reputation as hardliners, the presumption being that those of us who were in the Foreign Service before that election were not sufficiently loyal, which, of course, was totally incorrect, and unfair.

On arrival I was assigned as commercial attach# in the embassy. My early responsibilities included dealing with the Commerce Department's functions in Bangkok, and I had three or four high profile events which were very interesting and made the first year very interesting for me.

First, I was assigned to support Jim Thompson in his court case. Jim was the founder of Thaibok Silk. He had been an OSS agent up country in Thailand undercover when the Japanese occupied the country during World War II. While he was there he lived among the peasants, and he became familiar with the hand-woven Thai silk which the peasants

in these small villages were weaving, and using for their fabric-they're beautiful silks; a coarse weave, but all the more attractive therefore. They had wonderful bright and quite unique hues. Jim watched all of this while he was living undercover, and at the end of the war organized a program with the government and the support of the Queen to try to standardize the dyes so that the silk could be produced, and you could order ahead of time a certain shade of blue, and you'd get that shade. Up until this time the dyes had been essentially a product of the individual preference and taste of the farmer whose wife was doing the weaving, and they just threw in various amounts of cobalt, etc., to make the colors. Once the dye had been standardized, Jim had a product which was quite unique, Thai silk is unique. It's beautiful, it's made to order for home decoration—interior decorators—and for clothes, ladies suits, scarves, and even tuxedo jackets, etc. And he organized this firm, incorporated it, and called it Thaibok, and it became immediately a success. First, in Bangkok, then he started advertising in the New Yorker, and opened a New York office, and it took off, and became a big success. Within a year of doing this, while he was on a New York business trip, his partner, who was from Laos, a Lao, absconded with the dye formulae, and set up a competing firm around the corner. So when Jim returned from New York, he faced this guy who'd walked off with all his dye formulae and he had to recreate all of those. And secondly, he was being out priced by this competitor. So he brought suit in the Thai courts.

My first job as commercial attach#, was to go to court with Jim and try to assist him in shutting down the competition which he felt was illegal under Thai law. He won that suit after a fashion. Winning the suit really didn't solve the problem, but he did win the suit. Through that process I became a good friend of Jim's, and became fascinated by his interesting background. He subsequently had us to his home for dinner several times. He had one of the great collections of Thai antiques, and going to his house for dinner was truly a cultural experience. The food was fabulous, the company was great. My wife became a tremendous fan of his and we bought Christmas presents for the next twenty years of Thai silk.

Later, I guess it was fifteen years later, we learned of Jim's untimely death. We were especially saddened. He had gone off on vacation to the mountains of Malaya, the Cameron Highlands, and disappeared during taking a walk after dinner one night. There were a lot of theories that this was a throw-back to his days in the OSS, and he was therefore presumably a continuing CIA agent; that he may have been in the drug business; that he may have been a homosexual, and he may have been done in by a homosexual love affair; or that he may have fallen into a tiger trap of which there were many in that area, and that the Malays were embarrassed about this and therefore never chose to make it public. To this day his death has been unsolved.

The intrigue is heightened by the fact that approximately two years later his sister was murdered in Connecticut. And a third relative also died an odd death. What this all adds up to, nobody knows. But it is intriguing and it was fun to be involved with Jim Thompson who was a great American, and a great businessman, and had a magnificent eye for color and antiques.

During that time I went to my first business lunch at the Chamber of Commerce as an invited guest, the new commercial attach# in the U.S. embassy. I was invited to Ho Thien Lao, a restaurant, where we had a tremendous meal. The first course was a soup, and you were invited to use various sauces. I asked, because I've always liked hot food, which one of these sauces was the hottest. A little dish was pointed out and I promptly poured it into my soup and took a spoonful of it, and practically blew up on the spot. I knocked over two glasses of water reaching for a third to douse the flames that were in my throat. And that taught me to be very respectful about hot food in Thailand. In point of fact that sauce was made of hot red peppers which were ground with a pestle, and the oil from the skin of the pepper was what was used to make this sauce. Believe me it is hot. So that was a first introduction really. I found Ho Thien Lao a fascinating restaurant. It was in a building with eight floors. The first two floors were the restaurant, if you went up to the third floor, that's when the dessert started. I said, “What do you mean the dessert?” It was pointed out

to me that the top four floors of the restaurant, which supported the restaurant financially, were the best whore house in Thailand. So that was another introduction to Thailand, and what real life was like there. But being commercial attach# was not all boring.

Q: At that time how did we see the Chinese community, both the commercial activities, but also the Mainland Chinese connection?

JENKINS: Well, that was a major element in what we were trying to do there. Our purpose for being there, according to Dulles, and it really was our policy, was to try to contain the expansion of communism. In Thailand where approximately 20% of the population is Chinese (more than 50% in Bangkok). The Chinese were a tremendously influential component of the population. It's true all over southeast Asia, as you know. It's true in the Philippines, it's true in Indonesia, it's true in all of the countries of East Asia. And their influence really is a reflection of their control of business. The Chinese families, which all have roots in a common Mainland China base, worked together throughout East Asia and they really do dominate business.

Now in Thailand there was a great sensitivity about the Chinese, and a great antipathy, in many ways. So the Chinese businessman would marry a Thai, set up their corporation, invite the Minister of Defense or the Minister of Police, the Minister of the Air Force, or whoever, to be chairman of the board. They would create this board with maybe six Thai on it, and only one Chinese, namely the man who ran the company. And the Thai were paid off with a handsome director's fee, but were not allowed to get into the business of the company. So this was a facade the Chinese have utilized to get around anti-Chinese sentiment.

Now, what was really interesting in this situation, was that the Chinese in Thailand were divided between those who were loyal to the Mainland, to the communist regime, and those who looked to Taiwan, where the KMT, the Kuomintang...the Chiang Kai-shek regime was based. And, of course, many of the families played both sides of the fence.

But within Bangkok there was tremendous competition among these two factions. The communist Chinese pretty well controlled the Chinese chamber of commerce. They didn't have an embassy, but they had the chamber of commerce which was their instrument of activity, while the Taiwanese had a proper embassy. I would say on balance that the Mainland Chinese pretty well dominated the scene.

We historically had (and I think that remains true even today) a Chinese language officer on the embassy political staff. In my time it was John Farrior who was a wonderful fellow. He had been stationed in the Mainland before Mao's takeover and was a hostage for a time. As I remember his parents were missionaries there. He was succeeded by Art Rosen who was another Chinese language officer, who was Jewish, and used to laughingly say about Chinese business superiority, that he knew the really potent people in the world were “Chinese Jews.” Art was a wonderful, brilliant, exciting fellow to have at the embassy. Both Art and John were tremendous career Foreign Service officers, as far as I was concerned. I learned a great deal from each of them. The role of the Chinese in Bangkok was very pervasive, very important, and I think we were quite sophisticated as an embassy in recognizing and dealing with it.

The other big event in my time as a commercial attach#, was the first Constitution Trade Fair. This was the first program under the Eisenhower International Trade Fair program, which was designed to help promote U.S. exports to the world, a real harbinger, way out ahead of the power curve in terms of timing, to the present export efforts of Commerce Secretary Brown today and Bill Verity, the Secretary of Commerce in the Reagan administration (who was superb). My job was to coordinate U.S. participation in this trade fair. The U.S. participation in it was about 90% of the show. It was a great success. Ambassador Jack Peurifoy, who was then our ambassador, had a terrific sense of stage management, and he weighed in back in Washington to make sure that we had good corporate participation. Opening night we had a panoramic screen which was called Cinerama, which, of course, has become quite well known in this country. It was the first time Cinerama had ever been used, and it was breath-taking, in that part of the world

particularly. He invited Sihanouk, who was the King of Cambodia to come over for the opening. And Sihanouk and the King of Thailand, Phumiphon, officially opened the trade fair. With Peurifoy in a white silk suit and his attractive wife, there were the two Kings and their beautiful wives. It was a great, high profile operation. For my part, I had a lot of excitement recruiting American companies, assisting them in putting together their exhibits. We had a Thunderbird, one of the first Thunderbirds.

Q: A Ford sports car, which is now a classic.

JENKINS: And we had a Chevrolet Corvette. They were the hit of the exhibit. Ironically, at the end of the fair, Ambassador Peurifoy, with General Motors assistance, donated the Corvette to the Prime Minister, Phibun Songgram, as a gift which was extremely well received because Phibun was a car buff. And Peurifoy persuaded his wife to give him the Thunderbird for his birthday present. The ironic part of it is that it was in that Thunderbird that Peurifoy was subsequently killed in an automobile accident in the southern part of Thailand. It was his own fault, he was going much too fast over a one-lane bridge which narrowed to one lane from two, and he didn't see an oncoming truck and he ran head-on into it. Even more tragic, in the process not only was he killed, but his one healthy son was killed. The only survivor was the son who had a bad case of MS. He subsequently died of the disease. Betty Peurifoy, his wife, of course, was totally devastated by this. It was a very sad event and it colored our assignment there profoundly.

I might flash back a little bit to the evolution of how Peurifoy came to be ambassador. It tells a lot about the Foreign Service, particularly in that time of the first years of the Eisenhower administration. As part of the effort to shore up “the bastion of democracy” in southeast Asia (which we thought was very high flown lingo for essentially something which didn't exist), Eisenhower sent “Wild Bill” Donovan out as ambassador to Thailand...

Q: He had been head of the OSS during the war.

JENKINS: He was rather like Bill Casey in his wheeling and dealing approach, and brought about a tremendous build-up in CIA activities in Thailand which were designed essentially to contain Chinese influence. I think those efforts were less successful, rather than more, but there were many heroic, dedicated CIA officers involved in them, and it's no reflection on them. It caused problems with our neighbors. Donovan, for example, typical of his high-handed approach to the area, launched a major effort to support the Burmese rebels who were essentially KMT troops who had been defeated by the communist in China, and had slipped across the Burmese border, and set up pockets of anti-communist forces in Burma, immune therefore from attack by the Red Chinese. The only problem with this was that the Burmese government took a very dim view of having these foreign forces there. And, they promptly began organizing opium traffic to finance their existence and their arms, etc. Donovan was in the middle of this, providing supplies while denying publicly that there was any U.S. involvement.

Our ambassador in Rangoon, Joseph Satterthwaite, was called in by the Burmese government to protest U.S. support for foreign intervention into Burma. He denied that we were involved in any way, and the Foreign Minister promptly showed him a display of American equipment, PX rations, and uniforms, and Collins radios, proving in fact there was U.S. equipment there. The ambassador was outraged when he found that in fact Donovan had been running an operation in his country out of Bangkok and he wasn't even informed. As I recall, he resigned in protest over that issue.

Donovan left not long after we got there. Howard Parsons, who had been the head of A.I.D., was made Charge. Howard was a splendid man, subsequently became a Foreign Service officer and did a nice job until Peurifoy arrived. We learned that Jack Peurifoy was coming with some concern. Peurifoy had been very high profile in the press prior to that for having masterminded the overthrow of the government in Guatemala. President Arbenz had been a democratically elected leftist. U.S. policy at that time in Washington was nervous about communist expansion. This was again a period when McCarthy was

riding high back home. It was all historically quite ironic because we were the only great power in the world then, as we are again today. The Soviets could not really match up to us, but they were a threat because they were determined. They clearly didn't have the resources that we did. However, instead of dealing with this confidently, and firmly, we dealt with it in some panic.

So when Jack Peurifoy arrived in Bangkok, we were nervous. He was seen as a free-swinging interventionist telling local governments what to do, etc. Well, within six weeks we were all in love with Jack Peurifoy. Jack Peurifoy was a great leader of men. He worked that embassy like no ambassador I've ever seen. He was constantly walking around, sitting down on your desk saying, “What are you doing today? What can I do to help? I'm going in to see the Foreign Minister this afternoon, is there anything you'd like me to raise with him?” He'd visit and raise your issue with Prince Wan, the Foreign Minister, and then come back and report to us on what Prince Wan had said. I would then write a telegram reporting on what we'd done. But it was this constant openness, and availability, and respect. He knew he didn't know anything about the area, but he had people on his staff like John Farrior, for example, who knew the Chinese situation; and Al Moscotti (my colleague in the political section), who had a Ph.D. in Thai studies from Yale. A very bright man, bilingual in Thai. We had really great officers. And Jack Peurifoy knew how to use them. He also had a superb DCM named Norbert Anschutz (who remains a close friend of mine). He was a true Mr. Roberts, and a career officer's career officer. He was courageous, debonair, smart, outgoing, articulate, handsome. A terrific man with a wonderful wife, a true “house mother,” a great Foreign Service wife. And the Peurifoys and the Anschutzes turned that embassy around. Before then we had been suspicious of what CIA was up to. And, we were resentful of A.I.D.'s big budget, being run by a man who was a former Postmaster General named Ed Sessions. A perfectly nice man, but he had absolutely no background in this area.

With Peurifoy's arrival things came together. When he was killed, Norbert became Charge, and he was superb. He lasted about six months, and then under the new administration,

out came a man named Max Bishop. Max had been a career officer, a Japanese language officer. He was the only career Foreign Service officer to testify against the Chinese language officers in the period of the witch hunt by McCarthy. He was extremely unpopular among career officers, very reactionary, and paranoid about China.

Personally, I found him trying hard to be a nice man, very dedicated. He was not in any way lazy, or corruptible. He just had a skewed vision of things, in my judgment. He immediately started trying to get his hands around the embassy which he said was perceived in Washington as left-leaning. Which is a ridiculous thing to accuse Jack Peurifoy and his deputy of, given Peurifoy's successful record of anti-communism.

I remember one infamous occasion when I attended the country team meeting for the political section, and we were talking about what to do for the up-coming SEATO exercises, which I'll talk about in a minute. The economic counselor said something about the Colombo Plan, which was an economic plan put together by India, Ceylon, Malaya, etc., as sort of an economic counterpart to SEATO, but not run by the United States. Bishop blew up and said, “The Colombo Plan is a bunch of damned Socialists, that's a terrible thing, and we should be focusing on SEATO. That's the anti-communist instrument that we should be focusing on, to the exclusion of the Colombo Plan.” And then he got really carried away and said, “You know, I'm fed up with all this talk about the Colombo Plan and the British. Nobody has done anything about SEATO until I got here. I'm the one who has put SEATO on the map in this country.” And Norb Anschutz, who recognized this as perhaps unwitting emotional criticism of the late Jack Peurifoy, very quietly said, “That's a damn lie, Mr. Ambassador, and you know it.” And everybody in that room said a silent vow that wherever he went, we would support Norbert Anschutz. It was a very heroic thing to do. It deflated the ambassador completely, and of course, the ambassador never forgave Norbert for it. Subsequently we received a new DCM named George Wilson who had been Senator Knowland's aide.

Q: And Senator Knowland being a right-wing senator from San Francisco.

JENKINS: A very hard-line, very pro-Taiwan, very anti-State Department. Putting Wilson in an embassy was like putting a fox in the chicken coop. It was just outrageous. And Wilson was totally unsuited for the job. He wasn't a mean man personally, but he just was out of his league. It was a stupid appointment.

Bishop subsequently was pulled out after an incident which was quite intriguing. Bertie McCormick, the publisher of the Chicago Tribune, had died and his wife was left owning the newspaper. And she took a trip. She was very interesting, intellectually engaged, throughout southeast Asia, and arrived in Bangkok. And because she had known the British ambassador when he was Consul General in Chicago (in fact he had courted Berti McCormick's daughter), there was a close family tie there. She chose to stay at the British ambassador's residence, instead of the American ambassador's residence. Now, Max Bishop, being an ambitious, arch-conservative officer, was very upset that he was denied the opportunity to host the owner of the arch-conservative Chicago Tribune. The British ambassador, Sir Barkley Gage, had a dinner for her. My late wife was a friend of Sir Barkley's wife (who was a good deal younger than he was, and had been a Northwestern student when he met her). So there we are at the dinner party, when at the dinner a discussion started at the table about China—Mrs. McCormick had decided she was going to go in to the Mainland. Americans were discouraged from traveling to the Mainland, and certainly a high profile American like the owner of the Chicago Tribune. Bishop felt she would be giving political recognition to the “gang of rogues who were running Red China.” So at dinner, in front of everybody, he said, “I forbid you to go to China.” And Mrs. McCormick looked at him like he was out of his mind, and said, “I find that amusing. Who the hell are you to tell me where to go? You work for me, I don't work for you, you're the ambassador and my taxes pay your salary, and don't you forget it young man.” Bishop was undaunted by this and continued to argue the case. In the final analysis of course, she went, and when she arrived back in Chicago she wrote a front page article which was carried in the Tribune, which started out by saying, “The American ambassador in Bangkok might be a good plumber but he's a lousy diplomat,” and then launched into this

long discussion of how he was paranoid, etc., etc. Not long after that Bishop was out of there. A very interesting episode to observe as a young Foreign Service officer.

I had a marvelous experience with Eleanor Roosevelt in Bangkok. There is something called the World Federation of United Nations Association, which is still extant. They have an annual conference. And this particular year they held the conference in Bangkok, and because Eleanor Roosevelt was regarded as the “Mother of the United Nations” she was held in tremendous universal respect and affection for her role in promoting the United Nations, particularly right after her husband died. She was invited to be the number one guest at this event. The U.S. delegation, which was always a “Presidential delegation” appointed by the White House, was as usual, full of political contributors, most of whom didn't have a whit of knowledge as to why they were going to the conference. They were just going out to buy silk from Jim Thompson, and see the area. The U.S. delegation was very weak. The Mainland Chinese sent a delegation even though the United Nations was officially still at war with China in Korea. They were allowed in because the third world countries were already trying to cut deals with the Chinese, and this was not an official government event, in theory. The instructions our embassy received were to observe, assist the American delegation in any way possible, but don't get involved.

Well, I met the delegation and briefed them on what was going on in Bangkok, and told them a little bit about the conference. I met Mrs. Roosevelt and expressed my admiration. And she said, “You know I'm not part of the American delegation, but I appreciate your support.” The first thing I know on the first day of the conference, it was clear the Chinese had organized a lot of support among the Third Worlders, including the Indonesians and the Egyptians, and they were going to be voted in as full members of the World Federation, and the Taiwanese were going to be forced out. This would have been a major step toward recognition of the regime which was still officially at war with the United Nations. I recognized that this was, notwithstanding that the American delegation was so-called unofficial, an important setback for American policy.

So I went to see Norbert, and he said, “By all means get in the middle of it, ignore your instructions, get into it.” So I met with the American delegation. I early on decided they were pretty hopeless, but I did run around working on the various ambassadors who were in Bangkok, the Belgian, the Israeli representative, and the German, and the Frenchman, and put together a little coalition of delegations which would speak against this, and try and head it off. Well, it came down to the third day to a vote on the subject, and it looked like they had the votes and we didn't.

Operating without any instructions, but with Norbert's blessing, I went to see Mrs. Roosevelt who was sitting in a panel of academics. I called her out of the meeting and we sat down on a bench out in front of the meeting place. And I explained to her what was happening, and she looked at me very coolly and said, “Well, what do you think we should do?” And I said, “Mrs. Roosevelt, I have no right to ask you to do this, I have no authorization from the State Department to do it, but if you agree with me that this would be a setback for the United States, and would damage the United Nations and its reputation in the United States, particularly at this tense time in the United States where the extremists are denouncing the UN as being a bunch of communists anyhow, I would like to suggest that if you would proceed down to the General Assembly meeting place, and ask for the floor. Out of deference to you personally, they would give you the microphone.” She said, “I see that and I agree, and what do you think I should say?” So I said, “I'm just a junior Foreign Service officer here, but if I were you, you might want to consider the following because I think you might be able to move these delegations to support you. I have already lined up the Thai delegation.” The deputy Foreign Minister was a good friend of mine, as well as the Belgians and the Israelis, and several others to lead an effort to bring about an amendment which would strike this proposal to make the Red Chinese members. “But it would take a catalyst like your personal intervention.” And she looked at me and said, “Young man, take my arm.”

At this point it was 1955, Eleanor Roosevelt had to be 75 years old, very heavy set, and she was feeling the heat. I took her arm and we carefully wended our way down the stairs, and Mrs. Roosevelt worked her way toward the front, and waved to the podium and said, “I wonder if I might have a word?” And the chairman immediately lit up and began...of course. At this point all the men who were engineering the effort to bring the Red Chinese in realized what might be happening, and they were scurrying around trying to persuade him not to let Eleanor Roosevelt speak. Well, there wasn't any way that they were going to say no to Eleanor Roosevelt. She kept right on walking toward the podium. She was such a dominating figure in the United Nation's culture that of course she got the microphone, and she gave a hell of a barn-burning speech. She denounced the Chinese for continuing to remain in a state of war with the United Nations, and rejected as ridiculous any suggestion that the World Federation of the United Nations associations should accept them into their membership. At which point the Thai representative stood up, followed by the Israeli and the Belgian and the German, to support Mrs. Roosevelt. And finally the American delegation leader (it was some producer from Hollywood), stood up and said, “Yeah, we agree, we agree.”

Anyhow the Red Chinese initiative was killed. It was a great tribute to Eleanor Roosevelt. I cherish the photograph I have of her with me at that time. She was a great American, and a great political figure. That was a very exciting thing to experience, and I got a nice commendation from the Department for ignoring my instructions, and a big pat on the back from Norbert which I also cherish because I continue to feel that Norbert Anschutz was a truly great Foreign Service officer.

When we first moved into our house, fresh from Germany, it was a house built up on stilts, a lot of water around. With our Airedale patrolling the fence of the enclosure, he quickly stirred up what turned out to be two cobras. It was a very interesting experience, and he barked and fortunately he backed away so they weren't able to strike him, but they were trying to strike him. And because he made such a big racket, the snakes all left. He

became the de-snaking instrument. Thereafter, we were known as the house of the big dog. They had never seen a wooly dog because all the dogs in that part of the world are short-haired, and here's this big wooly Airedale.

The other thing with that Airedale that was fun was that he had to be trimmed all the time to keep him from being terribly uncomfortable in the heat. The only place I found where we could have this done was the Thai army cavalry veterinarian. I would take him over there to the stables and with two sergeants we'd take these big clippers out which were used to trim horses, and give him a haircut, and that was kind of fun. I developed a special friendship with a very unusual group of people.

The political situation in Bangkok was very interesting. Phibun Songgram was the Prime Minister. He'd been a general, and seized power in a coup where he replaced an admiral who had also come to power as a result of a coup. He was a very small, delicate man, very pleasant. He was Prime Minister and remained Prime Minister only because the two real power centers, the police and the army, found him mutually acceptable. They were determined that the other one wouldn't get power, so Phibun was propped up by competing political forces. They weren't political competitors in the sense one wasn't liberal and one wasn't conservative. Neither one of them were particularly soft on communism, or tough on communism. They were businessmen, and somewhat like today's Mafia. CIA was very heavily involved with the director of the police, General Phao, who among other things ran the opium business. And our army unit, the military assistance group, which was very large, and was providing equipment and training for the Thai military, again going back to the days of Wild Bill Donovan trying to create an effective army to contain Chinese aggression, was headed by General Sarit. Now Sarit's power came from his control of the whore houses, the pork business, and the liquor business. So they each had their economic bases, and each had a lot of bodyguards, and they each had—thanks to CIA—their own air force, navy, etc. They were two competing military forces. Both, in my judgment, were milking the United States for all the assistance that they could get, competing with one another, but supporting Phibun in the middle.

On balance, this wasn't too bad for the United States because the Thai were extremely cooperative with us in the United Nations. They played along with our anti-Chinese policy, although in fact they maintained their own channels to Beijing. And they kept a very strong public association with Taiwan. They hosted SEATO. SEATO headquarters was established there. And they did basically what the Thai have been doing for centuries. They collaborated with whomever they had to collaborate with to remain independent. Thai means Land of the Free, and even though they were nominally occupied by the Japanese, they maintained their own government, and they played along with the Japanese while at the same time they played along with the OSS, and the Jim Thompsons from the U.S. They were very clever that way, but it was very interesting for a western oriented Foreign Service officer to see the subtlety, and the Byzantine nature of politics and power in Thailand.

I had, among other things, responsibility for the Thai-Malay border area in terms of the political section's coverage of it. So I traveled down to the Thai-Malay border and rode in helicopters along the border with the CIA-trained border police who were trying to prevent the communist terrorist in Malaya from coming across.

Q: This is the time of the confrontation.

JENKINS: That's right. I had good relations with the British officers who were assigned to the Malay border police units, and we developed cooperation between the Thai and the Malay along the border for which CIA deserves a lot of credit, and I made a small contribution. It was interesting because there was shooting going on down there—I should have gotten combat pay. But I enjoyed it, I learned a lot, and saw a lot.

Another “hot area,” of course, was Vietnam. With my wife—not with the children—we drove in our convertible Ford to Saigon and stayed with friends there. We stopped at Phnom Penh, went to Angkor Wat and saw the ruins. At that time Diem was running south Vietnam, and it was taking off economically. It was very successful. It was peaceful in

the countryside. I think Diem's success, and the dramatic success of the private sector business economy that was organized there, drove the Viet Minh in the north to launch the attack because they clearly were losing the economic contest. They saw that the tide of history was running against them, and they had to intervene to reverse that. So not long after we left real shooting broke out, etc. There was intense, dramatic political back-and-forth going on in Saigon in the embassy and we had a large delegation there already.

“Lightning Joe” Collins, the World War II general, was made ambassador to Saigon by General Eisenhower. We had a number of people there, subsequently Henry Cabot Lodge, who made very serious misjudgments, and contributed to the eventual morass into which we slipped, and one of the great disasters in our history—our participation in the Vietnam war.

Collins did understand the importance of maintaining a clear wall between permitting American forces to engage in combat as opposed to have them just there as training forces. He deserves great credit for that. Cabot Lodge on the other hand was there when, particularly in the Kennedy years subsequently when Bobby Kennedy, with McNamara's active support, engaged in policies which led us into combat, and eventually led to our defeat, and I think history is going to be very harsh with them for the arrogance which they displayed in dealing with Vietnam.

Q: What were you getting from the officers at the embassy in Saigon?

JENKINS: I had several friends in our embassy in Saigon. The embassy was split. The main thrust—Donald Heath was the ambassador initially before Collins, and he had been a very pro-Paris Point of view. Anything we needed to do to keep the French in NATO, we should do, and if ignoring the Vietnamese and talking only through the French to Vietnamese is necessary, that's what we should do. The DCM was a terrific FSO named Ed Gullion, who subsequently went on to become an ambassador in his own right. Ed was for pushing very hard for our getting directly engaged with Vietnamese nationalists,

including the Viet Minh who many specialists believed were up on the fence at that time. They wanted very much to have a relationship with the United States. I think history has proven that they were not in China's pocket, that they were independent-minded and that we did not have to have a situation where the Vietnamese independence movement would be taken over by the communists. Ho Chi Minh would not necessarily have been hostile to the best interests of the United States. Gullion had figured all that out. With him was the head of CIA and the A.I.D. director, Heath, and Bill Leonhart, who went on to be ambassador to Yugoslavia, were opposed to any independent action. He and Heath dominated the process obviously, and they had the rank. However, the minute Heath would go away on vacation, or left to go home, Gullion started firing off policy telegrams questioning the wisdom of where we were headed. He never did succeed in changing the policy. A very interesting novel was written about this called Forest of Tigers by Robert Shaplen. It's a novelization of this dispute within the embassy. It's well done, a real little gem, and for anybody interested in the history of our engagement in Vietnam, I would highly recommend it.

I found the whole time in Bangkok very educational. I did suffer personally in the sense that I had typhoid fever. And I had obviously gotten it from traveling up country. I did a good deal of upcountry traveling. We were engaged in an anti-communist program called the democratization drive. We would go out with our Thai local employees in Jeeps, and take pictures of the King and the U.S. constitution. It was a fairly simplistic—and I think the Thai were all somewhat bemused by our actions, although they were very hospitable and they always enjoyed parties, etc. So I had a lot of dinners with governors which is always quite interesting, chicken was sort of the up-market thing to be eating, so they'd always have some chicken and rice, and so on, and we'd drink a lot of rice wine. They were very taken with refrigerators, and German beer. So the governor would typically have in his living room a Westinghouse refrigerator full of German beer or Carlsburg, which they called Catchyburg. After dinner we'd all drink cognac. That was another big favorite of theirs, the French influence was very significant in that sense. Cognac was very

popular. We'd be sitting around having cognac and in would come four or five Chinese dancing girls, and the tradition was that after a few dances and more cognac, that we were supposed to go off to a bedroom with our Chinese girl. That was part of the dinner, “the dessert.” Of course, I was always able to wiggle out of that, but it wasn't easy, it took some diplomacy. I was either sick...I came up with all kinds of excuses. It became a great joke, and my wife, “C” used to tease me about whether I was enjoying “dessert.”

Typhoid was no joke—I damned near died and went down to 120 pounds before they finally diagnosed it properly. There were a couple of good Harvard-trained Thai doctors there and they stumbled onto it looking for Dengue fever. Once they did that, there was a new drug called Chloromycetin, and within 24 hours it broke the fever. Then I had four months of recovery. It was a tough time for me. I arrived home weighing about 125, and that also colored my experience.

Thailand was a charming country. In those days they had not paved over all the khlongs or waterways. I gather it's pretty well destroyed its cultural identity today. The after-effects of the Vietnam war where Bangkok became the rest and recreation center for tens of thousands of American troops were severe. But the Royal Bangkok Sports Club remains a happy memory in my mind, very plush, very attractive, a race course, tennis courts, golf course, set up very much in the British tradition, linen-jacketed waiters, bare foot, and brass buttons. It was a neat place to be and a lot of fun. Playing golf was quite unique. We had a caddy carry the bag, and then we had a so-called khlong caddy. Half the time you were going in the water because the golf course was laced with these canals, and the place was full of snakes. And their job was to kill the snakes, make sure you could address the ball without stepping on a cobra. You come out of Germany after five years, and it's a whole new experience. So that was kind of fun, and it was a happy assignment all-in-all.

Q: Going back to the SEATO time. You were there at the creation, you were part of the apparatchiks who were putting this thing together. What was your initial, and particularly the young and maybe some of the older people, but the people who had to put this thing

together the politicians, who said this is what its going to be, about Pakistan. Because there's been a lot of debate about, all of a sudden Pakistan got roped into it. It was supposed to be the bridge, but Pakistan...

JENKINS: We wanted India to be a member but they refused to participate because they were a leader of the neutral Bandung group. They were instrumental in pushing the Chinese for membership, for example. The Paks came in because they were responsive to us and it was something that would set them apart from India. It was a way of getting close to the U.S. on a military to military basis. Pakistan was a military-run country. Burma didn't come in for example. Burma was with India on this. But Pakistan provided more muscle than anybody to SEATO, so far as SEATO had any substance, I would say it was the Pakistanis who provided it. Obviously the British, Australians, and Americans did, but for an Asian ingredient, even though they were south Asian, not southeast Asian, their officers were splendid, Sandhurst graduates, and splendid men. We really enjoyed them a lot, and they did a hell of a job.

We had one operation in Bangkok to sort of kickoff SEATO's existence, called Operation Firm Link. Firm Link included an airdrop and a naval landing combined exercise to demonstrate SEATO's ability to inject force onto the Asian mainland if needed. We had 5,000 paratroopers come from the Philippines. The Pakistanis had a couple of airborne battalions. We had jets that swooped low, and the navy came in, the New Zealand navy came, and the Australians had some troops with their wonderful bush hats, etc., and all these guys landed at the airport where there's a huge flat field which went on for miles, without accident, very effective operation. We had big parades through Bangkok and a lot of press coverage, etc. It was fun. But when we thought about how we were trying to impress the Chinese with their millions of men, it was kind of thin, not substance. We did the best we could. We had doubts as to whether it was going to have any impact. Certainly the Thai were heartened by it, it reinforced their commitment to stay with the West. The Pakistanis were trying desperately to stay with the West anyway they could. The Malays were very good. We had Cambodian and Vietnamese association with SEATO, although

they weren't active participants, they sent a lot of observers. And I think Dulles was happy with that. Given the interpretation of the world at that time, it was a pretty reasonable and effective thing to do. Whether that interpretation was real is unclear.

Q: Were you and the people at the embassy concerned about the possibility of a confrontation, a Chinese uprising in Thailand at that time?

JENKINS: No. It's odd. I think that's true throughout southeast Asia, although the Chinese controlled business, and much of the finance of that part of the world, they never seemed to try to get control of politics. If the Mainland Chinese had invaded, obviously, these Chinese would have collaborated with them to a large extent. A Hong Kong-like takeover was always a possibility, and we were always concerned that the Thai not feel that time was on the Chinese side because they would start to adapt in advance. We used to say that political reed watching is the order of the day. If the wind is blowing in a certain direction, they'll be there. We tried to maintain a prevailing breeze in our direction, and to some degree we succeeded with things like Firm Link, the SEATO operation. There was a lot of anti-Chinese sentiment, like anti-Semitism in this country. Historically the Thai would complain socially and privately to you that the Chinese control all the money, but they didn't hesitate to collaborate, to accept directorships, go on the board, marry Chinese, to get their hands on the money. Not very noble, but very realistic in a sense. The Thai have always felt that they were a small country, that they were impotent, but very clever, and they were going to survive through being clever. They dealt with the Chinese the same way. Not long after I left, in Indonesia after the overthrow of Sukarno, Suharto came to power and under him they slaughtered about 800,000 Chinese. That figure may be inflated but I think those were the numbers used.

Q: Nobody knows. This is in '65.

JENKINS: That never happened in Thailand, and it never will. The Thai were political warriors. They dealt with Pol Pot, for example, in Cambodia. They do business with

people, and they draw you into a relationship. That's their way of resistance. And who's to argue with it? Its worked for them.

Q: You left Thailand when?

JENKINS: 1956.

Q: When you left there, whither Thailand? What was your impression when you went. I mean we're really still at the height of the Cold War. China is a great menace, and all that.

JENKINS: Oh yes, very much so.

Q: What did you think?

JENKINS: Well, I thought on leaving, that we had made progress, that we'd supported the Thai. The Thai were desperate to maintain their independence, recognized that we were available, and that we were probably reliable. What was clear by 1956 is that things were coming unraveled in Indochina, gradually but clearly. That was distressing. And in Saigon, for example, half the city was Chinese and they were all working with the Mainland. What we didn't appreciate, and I don't think any American analyst did, except true experts who were too junior to have any impact on policy, was that the Vietnamese hated the Chinese and vice versa. It didn't matter whether they were communists or anti-communists, we were dealing with a national attitude and mentality. And I think that was true in Thailand, true in Burma. It's true throughout Southeast Asia, and it's logical. It shouldn't have been too hard for Americans to figure out that nationalism was driving politics. For ideological reasons Dulles was really miscast in this whole picture. “Wild Bill” Donovan was very naughty, and I think we missed the opportunity, not only to undercut communist influence in southeast Asia by dealing with and exploiting the nationalist thrust, but ignoring the fact that within China itself nationalism was a key element. I think the China language officers who were literally driven from the Service, were heroes, they were right, and they had the courage to say it, and they paid a terrible price. And I'll never

forgive Eisenhower as President for caving in to the Joe McCarthys of the world who were dominating our domestic policy. He certainly was a great leader in World War II, but not as a President. I found much about Eisenhower that I find about Clinton, reed watching, compromising, bending to the pressures, no clear agenda. Dulles, to his credit, had an agenda. It happened to be wrong, his picture of the enemy was wrong. He saw the Soviets as six feet tall, and us as 5'4", and it was exactly the opposite in the real world and history will show that, will confirm that. I felt that Thailand was on a pretty good track, and I left feeling that things were going to move ahead. In fact, as you look at it, Thailand has not really suffered a serious reversal. Even the loss of Vietnam didn't really damage the Thai. They are remarkable survivors. They made a lot of money out of the Vietnam war, they got a lot of commitments out of us. Their military got a lot of equipment, they got a lot of jobs, they paved a lot of roads, a lot of whore houses made a lot of money. And the net result of the whole thing was Vietnam was destroyed, decimated. We created a tremendous domestic crises in our own country, but nobody ever laid a glove on the Thai.—end of insert.

After these two eventful and, in retrospect, historic years in Bangkok, we returned home to Washington via Lake Bluff, Illinois, where we spent our home leave (2 months). "C's" parents lived there. Home leave is meant to be a time of regeneration and it was — especially for me returning at 125 lbs. after typhoid fever. C's family were marvelous, supportive people and loved their grandchildren. There was a cold-shower impact on us, however, to feel the palpable suspicion among C's school friends and their families towards the State Department and us — a sour left-over from Senator McCarthy's empty but scurrilous attacks on the Department.

While there we learned that we had been selected for Russian area language study — 9 months of intensive (8 hours a day, everyday) language training at the Foreign Service Institute and then, two semesters at Harvard's Russian Institute. The language training

was very wearing — a small room with no windows, four other “students” and a native Russian speaker.

While the language program was tough, it was really effective. The State Department language program is under-appreciated by the general public, but in my experience and diplomatic service around the world, our embassy officers are clearly better prepared to deal with native languages at the post where they serve than any other Embassies. The language program assumes no intelligence on the part of the student and uses a system which teaches language by sound, as a young child learns to speak.

After this intense interlude, we decamped for a fascinating two semesters at Harvard. I had long been awed by Harvard's reputation. As time went on, I found at Notre Dame and George Washington and in competition with Ivy League graduates, that Bowling Green had not really disadvantaged me. However, Harvard is truly something special. I was even more awestruck after coming to know Harvard than before I got there. I had the great opportunity to study with men like Marshall Shulman, who had been Dean Acheson's special assistant in the Department when I first started in 1950 and returned to be President Carter's principal advisor on Soviet affairs. Marshall was a fascinating and wonderful man and I learned a great deal from him. I also had two semesters with Zbig Brzezinski and Rickard Pipes, both of whom became National Security Council Advisors; William Langer, one of the premiere historians in the United States, who taught a magnificent two-semester course on the history of the Ottoman empire, which of course was central to Russian history; and the very impressive Dean of professors on the Soviet economy, Abe Bergson. On those occasions when we had a spare moment, we also were encouraged to host informal dinner parties at the alumni club where for example, we spent an evening with Henry Kissinger. All in all, our group of four Russian language students had a fascinating and very productive academic year at Harvard.

I must add that for my wife, it was slightly less than fascinating! With no help, a third-floor walk-up apartment on campus, my wife spent the long days coping with two in diapers and

one in nursery school. A Siberia-like experience for which she felt compensated when we landed at our next post in Berlin.

The Berlin experience quickly became even more exciting as in October of 1959, the East German leader, Walter Ulbricht, in a speech, announced that the legal basis of Western presence in Berlin had expired. The chief of our division, the late Howard Trivers, a superb scholar of German history, quickly picked up on the Ulbricht speech, and we began a series of messages back to Washington, sounding the alarm bell that the Soviets clearly were in the process of launching an attack upon our basic legal right to remain in Berlin. Crisis after crisis cascaded from that time. East Germans began to substitute for Soviet officers at checkpoints in an effort to force us to recognize their sovereignty and the division of Germany. Harassment of our convoys in the Berlin corridor increased regularly. The elevated train system, which ran throughout the city in one of the anachronisms of the otherwise divided Berlin was maintained in East Berlin. The S-Bahn, as they were called, began to appear in West Berlin with flags of the so-called East German Democratic Republic on them. This led to action on our part to stop the trains and remove the East German flags before they could proceed. Guards at the checkpoints in the presence of the Soviet officials would attempt to stamp East German visas into our passports. While these may seem petty, they were all part of clearly calculated policy to “salami-slice” the Western presence in Berlin.

Underlying this decision and the timing of the effort was the fact that the Soviet-sponsored regime in East Germany was a complete failure in governing its section of Germany. Living standards dropped as living standards in the West rose. The refugee flow from East Germany through Berlin to West Germany steadily increased until it reached a flood in 1959. It became increasingly apparent to us that the Soviets had to act to stop the depopulation of East Germany if they were not to lose total control over one of the gems of their empire.

The desperateness of their situation was dramatized by the particularly severe rate of departure by qualified doctors from East Germany. One of the things which I undertook in our political section was to monitor the refugee flow and attempt to compile statistics on the flow of doctors. I was helped in this by the opportunity to interview doctors who were living in West Berlin and by the presence of a fiancee of the New York Times representative David Binder in East Berlin's top hospital. David shared this information with me as I shared with him our views of political significance of this flow. There were states in the Soviet zone of Germany which in fact were virtually without doctors. You can imagine the psychological impact on the population to see all their doctors leave. In a desperate effort the Soviets even began to import Vietnamese and Bulgarian doctors as an emergency measure, which had an even more dramatic negative effect on the East German population.

While we concentrated on alerting Washington to the dramatic changes we saw unfolding in our exposed position in Berlin, we also tried to stay on top of attitudes in West Berlin and in the East German population in every way possible in addition to monitoring the flight of doctors. Together with my British colleague, the late James Bennett, and my French colleague, Xavier De Nazelle, we would attend open air district political communist rallies in the parks in East Berlin where we witnessed the population attacking party spokesmen for the dramatic deterioration of the situation and the contrast between their situation and the steadily rising standard of living in West.

On one occasion, when James and I walked into an outdoor restaurant where the local party was holding such a rally, the security goons who always tailed us as we went into East Berlin stepped to the dais where an East German party leader was speaking, with a note. He read it, stopped and said, “I understand that we are honored by the presence of representatives of the U.S. and British missions tonight. I wonder if they would like to come forth and contribute to our conversation?” It was indeed tempting, but “exercising uncharacteristic restraint,” James and I decided it was better to sit tight, drink our beer and

wait for the program to go on than to take this unsolicited opportunity to present Western views to an audience, which probably would have led to our being physically thrown out!

The freedom to move in East Berlin after going through a checkpoint, even though we were followed, led to several very interesting experiences. When Khrushchev came to Berlin to speak to reiterate his ultimatum and turn up the heat on our presence in West Berlin, he spoke at an open air gathering of tens of thousands in Alexander Platz. Once again, James and I had driven through the checkpoint and then taken to foot to walk to where the rally was going to occur. There were East German police everywhere, questioning the right of people to participate. We feigned ignorance of German and kept emphasizing that we were there from the United States and England to witness this historic event. We finally had worked our way to within a few hundred yards of the platform from where Khrushchev would speak when a particularly hostile police guard stopped us cold and said “no one may pass beyond this point without special identification.” Sort of as a lark, James and I took out our PX cards and held them up to the man who to our astonishment displayed the traditional German respect for documents and without understanding what he was observing, waved us through. The result was that we stood in the second row right in front of Khrushchev and observed the interplay between Ulbricht and other officials on the platform as Khrushchev spoke. Khrushchev was a dramatic and even theatrical speaker. His voice was shrill and threatening as he denounced the Western presence in Berlin as illegal and declared that we had six months to depart or take the consequences. The nervous excitement of his East German minion on the dais with Khrushchev was palpable. Needless to say, this made for interesting reporting telegrams back to Washington.

Perhaps the most dramatic confrontation of this period occurred slightly later when East German guards, in an effort to force our acknowledgment of the so-called German Democratic Republic and its sovereignty over West Berlin, instead of just harassing our army convoys, actually seized one on the autobahn. Since each of these convoys was equipped with a radio, we received word in the mission almost immediately. The

convoy leader reported that instead of just being delayed, the East Germans were in the process of taking possession of our six-truck convoy. General Hamlet instructed the officer in charge of the convoy to sit fast in the truck and refuse to leave, which they did. The East Germans stood on the running boards outside the truck, but did not attempt to use force to evict the American soldiers who were driving them. This deadlock continued for several hours. Meanwhile, General Hamlet and Minister Al Lightner were on the phone to Washington and Bonn as were their French and British colleagues.

From where we sat in Berlin, this was clearly one more desperate effort by Moscow to frighten us out of our rightful position in West Berlin. In Washington, the situation quickly created near panic and anxiety that general war could erupt over such an incident. General Hamlet called together the mission team and we debated for a short time what to do. Meanwhile the call of nature was having a predictable effect on the beleaguered American soldiers in the trucks and it was clear that they could not hold out indefinitely. Abandoning the trucks would constitute the first acceptance by the West of the suggestion that we did not have a full legal right not only to be in West Berlin, but to transverse the autobahn from West Germany to West Berlin to sustain our presence there. It was decided that Findley Burns, who was the number three man in the U.S. mission, a career diplomat, should go to Karlshorst at Soviet headquarters with two military officers and a Russian-American enlisted man, as an interpreter, to present a demarche to the Soviets: If the trucks were not released within two hours, we would use force to retrieve them. And, bless his courage, while Washington continued to debate nervously, General Hamlet instructed our tank units to load up with live ammunition, start their motors, begin to assemble to drive down the autobahn to free the U.S. convoy. This action, arming the tanks with live ammunition and moving them out of their assembly point toward the autobahn was, of course, closely observed and reported on by Moscow spies who monitored all of our military activities in Berlin constantly. Faced with the threat of the use of force, the Soviets backed down, the trucks were released and the convoy continued. Subsequently, we filed a very strong protest with Karlshorst, in Moscow, and with the Soviet embassy in

Washington warning them against such irresponsible and dangerous activity in the future. For the time being, our point had been made. The Russians had to allow for the possibility that we might actually risk war in order to maintain our rights. It was this perception which was central to our ability to remain in Berlin over subsequent years until in fact the wall eventually came down.

Throughout the two years we were in Berlin, there was an uneasy relationship between the mission, Bonn and more so Washington and as well between our British and French colleagues and their respective foreign offices at home. We were convinced almost viscerally that the name of the game in Berlin was willpower. If the Soviets we felt were persuaded that we could be threatened and forced out of Berlin or that we would lose our determination for the long pull they could by salami slice tactics wear away our rights and our determination to maintain our position. The net result if they were successful would have been the permanent advance of the border Soviet empire and help persuade our allies that our commitment to Europe would not stand the test of time. We saw several policy debates in Washington particularly when John Foster Dulles was the Secretary which led us to believe that the reliability of the U.S. commitment to Berlin was in question. Dulles, an astute corporate lawyer, seemed to be seeking always a legal means of reducing our engagement and eventually extricating ourselves from “an indefensible position.” When the Kennedy Administration arrived, we began to feel this same unease even though the indications we were receiving were clothed in more liberal and internationalist tone the statements by White House officials including those closest to Kennedy persuaded us that the Kennedy Administration was even more dedicated to extricating the United States from our commitment in Berlin than Dulles had been. We felt that somehow our strong consistent political reporting was simply being ignored by the White House and those around him who, as so often is the case in the last 50 years, tended to ignore the State Department experts and rely on the brilliance of White House staff who were frequently under-informed about real conditions. Cleverness seemed to rate a higher priority than reliability. One of the tactics which we evolved almost by

happenstance to deal with this was to develop our own channels of communication. In my case, I built a very close friendship with Dr. Otto Frei, a highly respected Berlin reporter for the equally highly respected NZZ, a Swiss newspaper which is probably the most respected paper in Europe even today. Among other things the NZZ we knew was read first thing every morning by Germany's Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer. Thus while we might have trouble persuading our own government in Washington to stand tough occasionally and our British colleagues were wringing their hands over the waffling nature of the then British government. (This was before Lord Hume became foreign minister.) Then the French were never quite certain where de Gaulle was standing (although it was usually very solid and very helpful), we were able by working with Otto Frei to communicate our views about developments in Berlin directly to the German Chancellor. This may seem a bit irreverent if not worse but in fact we of course did not divulge classified information while we did engage in mutual discussions with Frei about our assessment of Soviet and East German intentions and activities and in return received from Frei very impressive and timely assessments of the attitudes in West Berlin and among Western correspondents. The net result of this was that when a four power discussion would take place on how to deal with the latest salami slice initiative by Moscow, Adenauer would always be up to speed on our view and assessments of those actions and vigorously defend standing fast in the face of the Soviet threat. This was heady stuff. We of course kept our direct superiors informed of the discussions we had with Frei but basically it was in many ways the most effective communications channel that we had.

One of the great luxuries of living in Berlin in addition to the excellent restaurants and the very hospitable and friendly population and first class cultural activities was the existence of two top flight tennis clubs. As a tennis enthusiast, I always tried to actively participate in a tennis club at each of my assignments and throughout my German assignments this was a very successful way both with an unusual slice of German society. In Berlin I joined the Rot—Weiss Tennis Club and became a member of the club team with whom I journeyed to Western Germany to play matches against other teams. We became close friends, the

members of the team and I had the pleasure of regular tennis at one of the premiere tennis clubs in Europe.

Earlier I had done this in Munich, Hannover and Hamburg. In Hannover where (the club rank list had) the top members began with Baron Von Cramm and included three other Davis Cup historic players, I landed at number eight. I always had to explain that there was a tremendous gap in quality between number four and number five and even between seven and eight, but nonetheless I was on the ladder with four famous German players. There, too, we had great fun traveling to matches against other clubs and had the pleasure of playing on first class facilities.

I also knew a lot of people in the British intelligence section because they were all dealing with East Germany and I was a source of information for them, and they for me. Oddly enough, there was a famous British turncoat whom we knew, and whom we once entertained in our house, James Blake.

Blake was caught, arrested, jailed in England, and then spirited out by KGB agents from the jail. He went off to Moscow, and wrote a book. It was a famous case because like Burgess and McLean, he came from this highly structured society where if you were not in, you were out. The story goes that because his mother was Lebanese or something, he was not socially accepted. He suffered from this at university and in society. He had a very nice British wife, who was a friend of my wife's. He was a handsome fellow, wore a military uniform, but he was really working for Sandy Goshen, the head of British intelligence in Berlin. Blake caused the death of dozens of covert agents in East Germany by identifying or “fingering them” to Soviet authorities. (*No Other Choice by Geo. Blake, Simon & Schuster - 1990)

Our best friend in Berlin, was a British captain in the tank corps who went on to become the Queen's military advisor, Major General, Sir Michael Palmer. Mike and I have remained close friends, we visit back and forth, our children are friends, and his youngest

son is my God-son. My God-son was a major in charge of a tank unit in “the desert rats” in the Gulf War. His regiment is the same regiment his father was in, which is the same regiment his great grandfather was in, so it goes way back. So we had a great exposure to regimental life, and liked that a lot.

We also had a lot of friends in Berlin among young Berlin lawyers. The city was so pro-American. When we received orders to go to Moscow, and we went out to the stores we always encountered a warm reception. I took an old Harris tweed overcoat in to see if I could get a fur lining for it, to wear in Moscow. I walked in to this tailor whom I had dealt with but didn't know particularly, told him that I had been posted to Moscow, etc., and I wondered if I could have a rabbit skin lining. He said, “Absolutely.” He did a beautiful job and when I went to pay for it...it was going to cost $100, a lot of money in those days...he refused to accept payment. He said, “You have defended my city. You're going to Moscow to continue to defend my city, it's my contribution.” And my wife went in to get some jewelry, and the same thing happened to her. When people learned that we were going to Moscow, and they had known what we were doing in Berlin, they refused to accept payment. They were right, we were all “saving Berlin.”

Q: Oh, absolutely. Did you deal with the Soviets at all yourself?

JENKINS: Yes, particularly in Potsdam, which was the headquarters of the Soviet armed forces in Germany. We would go to meetings there and negotiate over people such as soldiers who would wander across the border. Findley Burns, the Mission Counselor, was the lead negotiator.

I was also involved with the Russians in various things such as the air traffic control disputes which reoccurred regularly. The Soviets were always trying to lower the air corridor, harass our planes. We also had social events with them.

However, once Khrushchev delivered his ultimatum, it became deadly serious and there was no more joking, no more socializing. With the exception of the tanks and the

convoy, they were all obvious harassment. They tried to use our trips through the check-point to take our passport and stamp an East German visa in it which would be a sort of recognition of East German sovereignty over all Berlin. So we refused to show our passports. Washington, always seeking to defuse or compromise confrontations insisted that we hold our passports up to the window, so we had to do that. We in Berlin never wanted to give them an inch.

Q: How about with our military? Using military to put pressure on is probably the most inexact weapon I can think of, because they're not very good at this.

JENKINS: They don't like to do it.

Q: They don't like to do it, and if they do it, it can end up with a master sergeant making a policy decision.

JENKINS: In Berlin, uniquely in my experience, the integration of our mission with General Hamlet's military structure was complete. And the CIA people were in the middle of it. There were often arguments between naval intelligence, which had a station there, army intelligence, air force intelligence, they all had people there, competing with CIA. Meanwhile our political operation was above this turf struggle. They all played to us to try and play their little game with each other. But basically other than that kind of turf friction, it was a well-knit unit. Hamlet was an excellent officer. He had two other generals and several colonels—they were all outstanding. I played tennis with them and we were all very close friends.

Sitting in that city, surrounded by Soviet power, with a six month ultimatum to get out or World War III would begin, brings you together. Our moral was terrific. There was very little friction. And our military in Berlin became very sophisticated in political terms, like my British friend; who became a real student of Soviet affairs. There was not, in Berlin, any serious difference of opinion about Soviet intentions or the necessity for firmness on our part. Now, back in Washington there were major arguments about all this, and even

in Bonn. Our embassy in Bonn was very nervous about the Berlin Mission's strong views. Fortunately we had Marty Hillenbrand in Bonn as DCM. Marty, having served in Berlin had an excellent appreciation of Berlin events. But after Marty left, the embassy in Bonn was not very strong on Berlin issues. But Washington drove policy, and Washington was torn in many different directions. Initially the problem was Dulles who was acting like a corporate lawyer, then the Kennedy administration came in and we got all these smart asses in the White House, like John Kenneth Galbraith, and a character who was editor of the New Yorker for a while, Dick Goodwin; and Arthur Schlesinger, the historian. These people were sitting around in the White House trying to figure out a way through sheer intellectual brilliance to disarm this confrontation, this historic confrontation.

Q: And Kennedy, of course, almost came a cropper when he got to Vienna, which led to all sorts of other things.

JENKINS: That's exactly right. It was a terrible thing. I think Khrushchev was persuaded by Kennedy's performance at Vienna that his bluff was going to work. And that's when the decision was made to put the missiles into Cuba.

In '60 I went to Moscow as the Berlin officer in the political section. By this time the Soviets had extended the ultimatum for another six months. While I was in Moscow reporting on the Berlin situation, and engaged in the negotiations, they finally withdrew the ultimatum. We knew it from an editorial in Pravda where the phrase, “on that basis” was omitted. The liturgy had been that the Soviet Union controls East Germany, Berlin is part of East Germany, and on that basis the western powers have no right to be in Berlin. One day the Pravda editorial read, “The Soviet Union controls East Germany. Berlin is located within East Germany, and in our judgment...” instead of “on that basis,” the Allies have no legal basis for being there. And we knew that the crisis was over. I wrote the telegram to the Department flagging this. It was really exciting. We still had the big crisis, access to Berlin, but the ultimatum was withdrawn.

Q: How did this Moscow thing out of Berlin...you'd already taken Russian so you had been the Russian specialist in our mission in Berlin. And I assume you were kind of keeping your finger on developments in Moscow.

JENKINS: Oh, yes, very much so, and even trying to keep my Russian up in Berlin. I took private lessons on the side just so I wouldn't lose fluency. When I arrived in Moscow...well, I had home leave after Berlin for a month and I spent that month working very hard reading Pravda, and things like that to get my Russian sharpened up.

We arrived, as I recall, August of 1960. It was a shock. From the air Moscow looks beautiful. There had already been some light snow, oddly enough...maybe it was September because I remember clearly there was some snow on the fields, not much. But all the pines and the birches from the air looked beautiful. When you arrived at the airport, Sheremetyevo, the international airport, it was three buildings. It was and still is tacky. You hit the ground, and all of a sudden you realize that “this place needs new management!” Everything was run down, the two years that I lived in the Soviet Union and frequent visits thereafter, it has always been one of the strongest impressions—God, this place is so badly maintained. (I have not been back since Yeltsin took over.)

Q: I've been reading some travel books, but also some travel books of the 19th century and there does seem to be a certain thread that runs through it. That the Russians maintain that they're European, but...

JENKINS: ...really are different.

Q: ...really are different and one of the things is that they don't do a lot of things very well.

JENKINS: That's right. The society has never provided incentives to maintain things. Whereas all of western societies at various times, there have been such incentive. I must admit that right now in the District we're lacking those incentives, and the District is beginning to look very run down. Garbage on the streets this morning, for example,

because there was no pick-up yesterday, and so on. But in the Soviet Union there had never been incentives. So you had these beautiful architectural gems which could fit very nicely into an expensive Georgetown neighborhood, but the woodwork had never been painted, and everything was either rotting or peeling. The average dwelling built for one family, would have four families in it. When I was there, there was a statistic which I thought captured it very well: there were 18 adults for every toilet in the Soviet Union. And the toilets frequently were no more than holes in the floor (which takes you to Asia). And I never really learned how to squat over one of those holes comfortably, so I had a lot of problems.

Q: I served in the Balkans, and they were called Turkish bombsights.

JENKINS: That's right, exactly. But arriving there right from the beginning we ran into the other aspect of Soviet and Russian society, it's an incredible bureaucracy. It wasn't evil, sort of secret police control, it was just these people had about eight people doing everything that could be done by one. So consequently there are eight times as many forms to fill out. We came in on diplomatic passports obviously, went into the diplomatic lounge where we were met by embassy staff. All that went reasonably smoothly. But we had our Airedale with us. Well, the Russians had never seen an Airedale in the first place. So when we arrived at the airport, they didn't know what to do. They decided he had to go through customs, but we didn't have a customs declaration, and they didn't have a form for a living dog. So we went back and forth. The agricultural department got into it, etc., and we finally got clearance. But I would say it was a three hour process, with a lot of moments in those three hours when it looked like they would not allow the dog to enter the Soviet Union. Since this was our pet Airedale and he had been with us for 12 years, there was no way we were not going to take that dog with us.

Well, we finally got in, and then went down to the Hotel Ukraine where our temporary quarters were, where we subsequently had to live for six weeks. It was very difficult, the conditions were not good. As we arrived, we walked into the desk, with the Airedale on

the leash, and our three boys, and put our passports down. They confirmed, yes, they do have a reservation for us, a suite of two rooms back-to-back. And then the woman looks up and said, “Of course, we do not allow dogs in the hotel.” This was a real challenge, and I must say probably in my entire diplomatic career, I handled this more diplomatically than anything I ever faced. A bolt of lightning came to me, and I decided, okay, this is the land of non-sequiturs, here we go. I told the woman profusely, “I am so impressed. Do you know on the entire European continent, the Soviet Union is apparently the only country where dogs are not allowed in hotels. You are so progressive, that's so sensitive to sanitary considerations,” and I had to go into that, “I really take my hat off to you.” And she nodded and smiled and said, “That's right. No dogs allowed in the hotel.” We picked up our passports and the keys and the dog, and went right up to our room. She never said a word. And as we came back out about two hours later to take the dog for a walk along the Moscow River, she looked up and wagged her finger, and said, “Remember no dogs.” And I said, “Yes, I do remember. I can't wait to write to tell my friends.” And she beamed and nodded. For six weeks every day she would say, “No dogs.” And I'd say, “Absolutely.”

Q: How about the concierge?

JENKINS: No problem with her, she didn't give a damn. She was asleep most of the time anyhow. But that was a hell of an experience. Then we had one other little flare-up in that period. We were walking the dog, and I didn't normally keep him on a leash because he was very well trained. We were right along the edge of the river, and there was about a three foot drop down into the river, and occasionally there would be stairs going down where boats could tie up. Well, all of a sudden the dog saw a fish, and he jumped in. The Moskva River is a filthy place, covered with an oil slick. I eventually got him back out again, up one of those little stair platforms. We took him back into the hotel and tried to wipe him off with newspapers, and this was a little tricky. The woman at the desk didn't happen to be looking. We got him up in the room and had to call the embassy doctor to

help us get the oil off his coat. There were three days of constant bathing, and not a happy Airedale.

Q: You arrived there maybe September 1960. This is the end of the Eisenhower period. I guess the U-2, and the summit had just blown up.

JENKINS: That had been about eight months earlier.

Q: But Khrushchev was in...

JENKINS: Khrushchev was in. The relationship was extremely confrontational. The Berlin crisis was in full flower. While shortly after we got there, and I don't remember the exact dates and I have to get back and get this I suppose, we did the ill-fated Bay of Pigs landing.

Q: That would have been during the Kennedy time.

JENKINS: That's right, a little later.

Q: ...February-March of '61.

JENKINS: That's right, and it was a huge embarrassment. We had a lot of things happen in the two years in Moscow which were very exciting.

Q: In the first place, what was your job?

JENKINS: I was in the political section. The political section was divided into two parts, internal and external. Dick Davies ran the internal, and he was busy analyzing the Politburo, and the domestic problems, etc., and the first signs of unease and unhappiness, dissension in the literary circles among the intelligentsia. Khrushchev had started to loosen up internal controls. He gave his famous speech at the Party Congress. The thaw had begun domestically. Internationally, Khrushchev became more of a gambler,

convinced that we really didn't have the willpower to use our military physical power and that therefore he could muscle us and expand their borders. They became very aggressive in many ways, not only in the Cuban situation, but also in Africa. They founded Lumumba University while I was there and they brought in a couple thousand young Africans for four years of study and training. Ideally, they were supposed to go back as committed Soviet agents, but most of them were so turned off by the experience they went back as anti-communists.

Q: I dealt with Bulgarians around this time and the Yugoslavians, the Africans in Bulgaria did not like to be called black monkeys.

JENKINS: I can't imagine why.

Q: ...for some reason by the general population, and they up and left.

JENKINS: Well, Lumumba was more or less the same experience. We had a number of...I'd say hundreds of Lumumba students turn up at the USIS reading room because being non-Soviets they could push their way into the Cultural Center. We ended up pouring out Time magazines, and America magazines to them, and they would take them back to the Lumumba building, campus-dormitory, and then from there they'd spread them all over the place. So it became really a running sore for the KGB and the Soviet control mechanism. These people would talk to us and tell us what was happening, what was being taught. We did a number of despatches on this program, and our basic assessment was that the Soviets in opening Lumumba University did us a great favor, and greatly undermined their own effectiveness, by bringing these people face-to-face with Soviet reality which was very unattractive.

I was in the external section working with Culver Gleysteen and Frank Meehan. And when Frank left to go to Berlin (back to my old job), Spike Dubs replaced him. So once again the Hamburg cadre of Meehan, Dubs and Jenkins were all together, this time in Moscow.

Q: First, let's talk about the ambassador. Who he was, and how he operated.

JENKINS: The ambassador was Llewellyn Thompson, who is in my judgment, the finest career officer I ever had associated with. He was not a strong personality like Chip Bohlen had been, he was shy and retiring, but absolutely a splendid and decent man. He had a sensitivity to political realities, and the Soviet Union, a very good dialogue with Khrushchev and his entire Politburo. And he had terrific insights. Russia was very interested in being accepted in the world cultural scene as legitimate, which she really wasn't. But we played on that, and we arranged for playwrights to come from the United States under the exchanges program which they tolerated because they wanted their scientists to get in and steal whatever they could in terms of technology. In exchange for that we sent people who had political influence into the Soviet Union. We worked with the FBI to trust these Soviet scientists contained them basically. But in exchange for that we did have a fairly successful flow of important Americans visiting Moscow. Benny Goodman came to Moscow while I was there with his band. For three nights they had concerts. The first night the audience was all invited apparatchiks, and they all sat there stolidly, while Benny put on a magnificent performance. The second night a lot of the intelligentsia and the younger people came and they went crazy, absolutely crazy. It was a huge success. Another event we had was the Michigan University marching band, where they played the Michigan fight song, etc. That was put on at Lushniki sports palace where there are seats for 10,000 people. The audience was packed with military people in uniform. They were trying to limit the impact...well, the Michigan band is so great, that these guys in uniform went wild. They were all standing up on their chairs, and cheering and applauding. The band was a huge success. The appetite for things western, especially American, was so dramatically revealed in things like this that every time there would be a crack, we'd push something through it. I subsequently was in charge of USIA's programs for five years for that part of the world, and had a chance to cash in on the experience that I had in Moscow.

Khrushchev allowed this opening. In Stalin's time, none of that would be permitted. He was afraid of western influence. Khrushchev seemed to realize that the influence was coming and that he had to try to get ahead of the power curve. He permitted things on a controlled basis which we were able to do.

Q: How did we feel about the Virgin Territories?

JENKINS: The New Lands, the Virgin Territory. All of our agricultural experts, and we had two very good Ag Attach#s in the embassy who spent all of their time on the road looking at crops, etc., said this was a disaster in the cooking, and we predicted that.

Q: We went through that same thing in 1917.

JENKINS: Precisely, it's the dust bowl. They were creating a dust bowl.

Q: Were we telling them?

JENKINS: Well, the information was certainly there. When they traveled it was obvious. Soviet agricultural policy was a disaster from 1920 on. It was always driven by politics, not productivity. Collectivization was not designed to make more efficient farms, it was designed to remove the political independence that farmers had, and the leverage they had on the regime. If they didn't deliver their crops, the country went hungry. So they had to somehow get away from that, and they did it by collectivizing. They broke the farmers. Everything they did in the agriculture area was designed to increase productivity, but politics always came first. And for Khrushchev the Virgin Lands was a new campaign. It was a way to be a popular president. He wanted desperately to be genuinely popular, and he was switching from rule by terror, to what he thought was going to be rule by popular acclaim. He was dead serious about it, he failed, but it wasn't for lack of trying. In his efforts to do this, he opened up the Soviet Union quite a bit to western influence.

To get back to Matlock, he eventually ended up in the political section, and then, of course, he went back to Moscow as DCM, and then he went back again as ambassador. I think all together he spent some 11 years in the Soviet Union. And in the Gorbachev era, when Jack was ambassador, was DCM and then ambassador, he was so good, he knew so much about them, that he eventually became almost an informal member of their cabinet. He met with Gorbachev regularly. He would attend meetings of the Central Committee to speak on things. He was able to have a tremendous influence. I think history is going to record the incredible accomplishments of Matlock, who is the latest in a series of outstanding career ambassadors in Moscow. They're all steeped in Soviet affairs, three-timers usually by the time they got to be ambassadors, they all went through an education program, like I did at Harvard, they all arrived with the Russian language. It was absolutely a superb performance by the United States, and we dwarfed other embassies there in terms of our competence.

Q: Did you find as an embassy, you were the people they came to from other embassies?

JENKINS: Yes, all the time. It wasn't only our power, it was our knowledge. There were a few areas where we were deficient, the Japanese, for example, had a fisheries attach#, but we didn't have anybody in fisheries. But they came to us for our agricultural attach#s. The French had a stronger cultural section than we did in terms of the number of people, diversity of contacts, etc. But in everything else, we were the best informed.

Of course we had an extremely close working relationship with our allied counterparts. I was the Berlin man in the embassy. Maybe I should talk about that first.

Q: Why don't we talk about the whole Berlin thing.

JENKINS: Okay. Arriving there it became my responsibility to interpret what I could see in the papers, by attending lectures, and traveling. I might interject that we had “a travel program.” I was the travel officer in the political section, among my other duties, and

we deliberately laid out territories, or areas, of the Soviet Union we wanted somebody to cover. The Defense Department attach#s were on the road all the time for their own reasons, but we shared maps. If we wanted to go to Frunze, and Alma Ata, which I did, and the Defense attach#s had not been able to get certain information about the kinds of factories which were present, etc., for their purposes, we would share requirements. And they would come back and give us things like programs from cultural events where we could see who was actually appearing. And we would pay calls on the local editors in the newspapers in these outlying republics, and we'd call on the republic foreign minister, who of course was a sham, but he was thrilled when we showed up. That was the event of the year. So we would get something out of that every time. I would say three-fourths of the Soviet Union was off-limits, even though on the official map it was all open. You had to apply for authority, a propusk, to go there. Then the Soviets would reply and say, “Sorry, there are no hotel rooms this week,” which meant it was a closed area. They didn't want to admit that that much of the Soviet Union was closed. We had similar controls back here which I ran when I came back to the Soviet desk in the State Department subsequently.

But having arrived in Moscow, I immediately picked up on the Berlin subject—read all the articles, and the magazine articles, and I met the person at the foreign ministry who was dealing with it, and his boss, who was the deputy foreign minister for Western Europe. He had three people under him, and I got to know all of them—one of them quite well, even socially. And I was getting all the reports from Berlin, and from Washington, and the intelligence community about what was happening in Berlin. This was just before the wall went up. I was convinced when I left Berlin, because the flood of refugees was becoming so strong through West Berlin, that the Soviets would have to cut it off somehow. And I predicted in a telegram from Berlin, which I had a lot of trouble getting out from Moscow, because my immediate superior, Culver Gleysteen, felt that as a “junior officer,” a new boy in Moscow, and that I shouldn't be dealing with such high policy matters, I should focus on interpreting what was in the newspapers. But I had my own views about that, and having been in Berlin, and right in the middle of it at a fairly high level for two years, I

was convinced that I was right, and I wrote this message predicting that the Soviets would seal off Berlin. Actually I thought they would put the fence around all of Berlin, keeping our access to East Berlin open and thereby preserving the city's quadripartite status. What they did, of course, was put the wall right through the middle. Two weeks before they built the wall Hal Sonnenfeldt, who was in the Department at that time, had come out to Moscow on a visit, I shared my message with Hal, and he took it back. I never did get it out in its initial form from the embassy because Culver sat on it. I didn't feel that I could go directly to “Tommy” properly. Confronted with a bureaucratic block like that, I probably should have gone to the Ambassador. But anyhow, the message got out, I got it back through Hal. And lo and behold it happened. At that point our relationship with the Soviets became extremely tense.

Q: Kennedy was in when this...

JENKINS: That's right.

Q: Before we move to that, did you...

JENKINS: I was in Moscow when the election occurred, and I watched the debates between Nixon and Kennedy in the snack bar at the back of the embassy building. We had our western colleagues and journalists in to watch this. We got the tapes, we didn't see the TV live, but it was taped and flown out to us. And we shared that, and we were all pretty excited about Kennedy.

Q: What was your reading about the Kennedy administration, and the Russians?

JENKINS: Well, we in Moscow initially, were all thrilled, and the Russians were scared to death because Kennedy was a political sex symbol all over the world. They couldn't cope with that. This was a popularity. Eisenhower had been disliked by a lot of people, he was regarded as too old, too cautious. He was a military man, so in Third World countries he was looked upon as sort of an American imperialistic symbol. When Kennedy came

in that was dissolved. And all of a sudden the United States became the image and symbol of young, vibrant, creative peace loving, tough, all the right words. And in Moscow the Russians all felt this way. The people would come up to us in the streets, and say, “Voroshe.” It was very satisfying. John Glenn went into space at that time, and that was a plus, and again all the westerners, and the Russians, applauded us. Nobody among the Russian people really wanted us to fail, because we were what they wanted to become.

However, we began to run into the arrogance of the Kennedy White House early on. It was difficult. Tommy was extremely impressive and careful, and he nurtured his ties, and played his hand very carefully. He was very secretive, he didn't broadcast like Kennan did—his telegrams for everybody to see and to show off. He really wrote telegrams for Kennedy and for Dean Rusk alone. I think our impression of the Kennedy administration at first was very hopeful. We had felt that Dulles and Eisenhower, and Chris Herter, the former governor of Massachusetts, were weak on Berlin, didn't seem to grasp that it was our will that was being contested. It was essential, just as in dealing with any playground bully, that when you're tested, you have to stand up the first time, or you're just going to spend all your time rolling over. It was that simple. It was never fully taken at face value by the Eisenhower administration. When Kennedy came in we were very hopeful that this would change. Here was a PT boat hero, young, and vigorous. Dean Rusk was solid, and a wonderful man. But Kennedy's White House, like Clinton's, was full of arrogant friends who all were convinced they knew better than anybody. Dickie Goodwin, Schlesinger, the historian, John Kenneth Galbraith, were absolutely convinced that they were intellectually far superior to these drones in the Foreign Service and in the embassy, etc.

This attitude prevailed. So we became very nervous. We were competing for Kennedy's mind, we thought. Things like Jack Matlock's airgrams about dissent among the intelligentsia, were very important. Kennedy read those, and Jack received a personal commendation from Kennedy for them. Tommy was very trusted. Kennedy trusted him, so Tommy was able to dampen down a lot of the mischief that Bobby Kennedy and all of his cohorts were promoting. And Bobby Kennedy was a big part of the foreign policy process

in the Kennedy administration, including in my judgment, putting our troops into combat in Vietnam instead of remaining “advisers.”

Q: You're talking about Vietnam.

JENKINS: Yes. But as we went on into this Berlin confrontation, it became more and more serious. We faced the Khrushchev ultimatum. The Soviets began creating incidents in the air corridors which had been sacrosanct up until then. I remember once Sir Christopher Steele, the British ambassador, flew from Bonn to Berlin in the corridor, and two MiGs came in and actually brushed the wings of his plane. That was a huge confrontation, and it was one of the occasions when our collaboration with our allies was so close.

In the French embassy, Jacques Andreani, the present ambassador; in the German embassy, Jorg Kasti, who is now retired; and in the British embassy, John Tretwell, and I were a four-power working group on Berlin in Moscow. We were all of one mind, and we shared everything in reporting. We ran over everything in the telegrams with one another, and then cross-reported. That was very valuable because we all had somewhat distinct access to different kinds of Soviets. We would meet once a week at least, just to meet, but frequently we'd meet every day depending on what was going on.

Q: Just one little detail. Bugging was always...how would you meet?

JENKINS: Each one of our embassies had a secure room, which is a plastic room built within the room where you meet. It's up on plastic stilts, and has clear plastic walls—they're plastic bricks, little squares and they're all bolted together with plastic. We had a conference room, a table with chairs around it, and we had a sound machine.

Q: A sound-making machine with sound around the outside.

JENKINS: Yes, it wasn't very comfortable, and the temperature was never really very good, but we assumed that anywhere else the Soviets could hear us. So we would meet

usually in our bubble, but sometimes in the British bubble and a couple of times in the German and the French bubbles. Our bubbles were all very similar. We would meet and analyze events, and decide what we were going to report, and we'd tell each other what we were going to report. And then we'd go back and report to our respective ambassadors, and keep them informed. The ambassadors would also meet frequently as a group, sometimes with us, sometimes without. In the Steele aircraft incident, to illustrate how closely we worked together, it was decided that we had to do a protest immediately. When Steele's plane was buzzed and brushed, we couldn't wait for our four capitals to coordinate a message and send it back to us. It required an immediate protest in the strongest language. So Tommy and Sir Frank Roberts, the British ambassador, and the French and German ambassadors, all agreed. I took it upon myself to write the first draft with my three colleagues sitting around the table with me. Then they suggested changes and we ended up with a 2-page demarche, which we had drafted together. So without waiting for approval, we flashed these back to our capitals, and the ambassadors went in simultaneously with these protests. We informed Washington instead of requesting permission. It was very tough language, “we will take appropriate steps, including the use of force if necessary, and if you want to bring our relations to a crisis point where world peace is threatened, this is a good way to do it.” The message was delivered, the Soviets took note of it, there was never another incident again. The only reaction out of our capitals came from the British. Lord Hume was then Foreign Minister. He wrote and commended the drafters of the demarche for an outstanding job demonstrating initiative, etc., in the finest tradition of the British service, etc. So Sir Frank and John Tretwell shared Lord Hume's message with Tommy. That was a very satisfying and exciting thing to be part of.

Q: At that time what was Khrushchev and his...

JENKINS: What were they up to? They were testing us, convinced that we didn't have the willpower. They were pushing and slicing constantly, we called it salami slicing, to see how far they could get. The goal was to eventually force us out of Berlin. They seemed

convinced that we would pick up our marbles and go home, because it was too scary to continue the confrontation. And if that had happened, in my judgment, the psychological impact in Europe would have been decisive. And I think instead of the Cold War going our way, it would have at least temporarily gone their way.

Q: You mentioned when you were in Berlin that you did not find support back in Washington.

JENKINS: It was still the case under Kennedy. There was great intellectual unrest about this. Rusk was not that strong at the White House, Mac Bundy constantly agonized over things, he was more interested in the intellectual process than he was in the substance. The sense of history which Kissinger reflected so well (and Acheson in his time), was missing. Rusk had a sense of history, but it was all Asian oriented. I thought Dean Rusk was a magnificent human being, but obviously he was basically mistaken about our role in Asia, and the Vietnam war.

Q: Did you have that feeling at the embassy of unease?

JENKINS: Yes, we did. We were not comfortable. We did not have the sense that the policy was firm. We were constantly fighting for Kennedy's mind. We had great confidence in Tommy, and we knew that Tommy was very effective in his dialogue with Kennedy, and even with Bundy. But we also knew that around them were the Dickie Goodwins of the world. Goodwin was the Stephanopoulos of the Kennedy White House. He even had the woolly head hair-do which was not yet fashionable. They were arrogant...

Q: Stephanopoulos for the record is William Clinton's chief of communications...

JENKINS: Policy adviser. All of these men had come out of the campaign. Pierre Salinger was part of this but he wasn't a serious policy player. They were cocky as hell, and convinced that we were a bunch of drones, and that we couldn't be trusted, and if they could only get Khrushchev off in a room with Kennedy for an hour, why, it would all work

out. Which, of course, they eventually did in Vienna and it didn't work out at all. What we said was true. Khrushchev came in, stepped on his foot, kneeded him in the balls to look at his reaction. And the reaction was weak, and therefore Khrushchev ratcheted up his initiative.

Q: What were you getting out of this? Kennedy went to Austria after a very successful PR trip to France, particularly because Jackie was...

JENKINS: ...because Jackie was such a hit, that's right.

Q: The Kennedy meeting with Khrushchev in Vienna was an important part of the Berlin crisis. What were you getting in this respect?

JENKINS: We felt it was the golden opportunity for him to be charming, to have Jackie charm Khrushchev, etc., and then have Kennedy come in and day, “Now look, I want to say this perfectly straight. Get your bloody hands off Berlin or we'll destroy you.” But he never did. He was constantly talking about, we've got to find a way out, what can we do to reassure you, we don't want you to distrust our motives, we're not aggressive. He played right into Khrushchev's impression, and Tommy was upset. He didn't articulate that to us because he was just too professional for that. But we knew he wasn't happy with the way it went, and we indeed saw further deterioration in the confrontation as a result of that meeting.

But in the key period, in the winter of 1961 and '62, I believe the confrontation in Berlin, the ultimatum having been raised, came down to “access.” So Khrushchev switched his target, and he insisted that we accept East German control of the access, which had been part of their focus from the beginning. Remember Dulles originally had this idea that we would accept East Germans as “agents of Moscow,” and legally our position would be unimpaired, he felt that way. Well, this was not a legal issue, it was a psychological confrontation. And Kennedy continued to futz around the issue. But the Russians got so aggressive finally that we had to have a series of special negotiations on Berlin access.

Thompson and Gromyko, and Semyonov on the Russian side. I went with Tommy. I was “the Berlin man” in our embassy. We had these long cables come out from the Department with instructions. I would boil them down and interpret them for Tommy. They were replete with details. And, of course, I had lived in Berlin so I would get the instructions, and I'd work out a talking points paper for Tommy, and then the two of us would go in and meet Gromyko. We had five meetings. They were all very high profile, reported in the New York Times on the front page. (My picture was on the front page of the New York Times with Tommy.)

The first meeting we held agreed to have these consultations on Berlin access (which already made us nervous because we didn't want to consult on something which was “a right”). But that's what Kennedy insisted on. As we arrived at the first meeting Gromyko received us in his outer office and escorted us into his little sitting room. Gromyko was extremely friendly. “Tommy, how's Jane? How are your little girls? Is everything going well, I hope it's not too uncomfortable. It is a difficult time for us, but it has always been a great pleasure for me to work with you professionally because you are so professional.” He turned to me, and this was all in Russian even though Gromyko spoke beautiful English, and we chatted a little bit, and he complimented me on my Russian, and asked where I lived, where was my apartment, etc. Semyonov was also friendly. They had a translator, Victor, who had been Khrushchev's translator and subsequently became Gorbachev's translator, he attended every meeting.

Q: A gentlemen with a bald head and a mustache?

JENKINS: No, Victor was a young man with wavy hair. He had gone to school in Washington as a boy, and had very good English.

We sat down and agreed that we would have another meeting the next week, and then we tabled our position, and they tabled theirs, we both agreed we'd study the positions

and report back to our government. And we left. It was a very pleasant meeting, about 45 minutes.

The second meeting took place about a week later. We had long instructions from Washington about what to present, etc. We walked in and Gromyko was absolutely a changed personality. He was cold, hostile, unfriendly, abruptly told us to sit down, and then launched into a 45 minute tirade about American irresponsibility and aggression, and lack of legal basis for being in Berlin at all, and how we're going to do this, and we're going to do that. And at one point he said, “You know, you've got to recognize that if you allow Berlin to become the flashpoint for a war, we will incinerate New York City in 24 hours.” That's pretty heavy stuff. Tommy is sitting there on the couch, and I'm sitting on the couch next to him—Tommy was a chain smoker (eventually he died of lung cancer), and he's smoking quietly. Gromyko stopped. He gave this oration in a fairly high pitched voice, it was not a casual conversation. He was pounding on the coffee table. And Tommy just kept smoking, and there was silence. About 30 seconds went by, Tommy never said a word. Gromyko said, “Well, Mr. Ambassador?” And Tommy very quietly stubbed out his cigarette, and looked up at Gromyko, and said, “Oh, are you through Mr. Minister?” It was a beautiful deflation. And of all the things I witnessed, that was the coolest diplomatic performance I ever saw. I was sitting there, my blood pressure was going up, of course, I didn't open my mouth but I was taking notes. In these meetings I was the scribe, everything that they said, or that we said in response, I wrote down as best I could. And because it was first spoken in Russian, and I could understand the Russian, and then repeated in English, I was able to do it because I'd catch three-fourths of it, or half of it the first time, and fill it in the second round. And when we spoke, the same thing happened. Tommy spoke slowly and deliberately, but if I missed anything I got it in a Russian translation from Sukhodrev.

Tommy sat there and waited and then said this, Gromyko's face fell. He was clearly embarrassed. And then Tommy very quietly, in about two paragraphs, said, “I deeply regret that you have been required to put on this performance, which I regard as

irresponsible, undiplomatic, and certainly below your high level of diplomatic and professional behavior. You know, and I know you do, and I'm sure Mr. Khrushchev appreciates this, that if we ever get into the beginning of a nuclear exchange, that no doubt you can damage an American city or two, but you also know that the entire Soviet Union will become a rubble heap within 24 hours. It's your choice of time frame, it will take a lot less than that." And he stood up, and we left. Gromyko's mouth was open. It was a dramatic performance.

After each meeting, we would return to the residence and Tommy and I would sit down and review my notes. He was writing also on a pad, his interpretation of what was happening, and then I would review his notes. And I would make suggestions, and he would incorporate some of them, which was very heady stuff for a young diplomat, and then he would correct some of the things that I had done, or add an interpretative phrase. I would take the notes and go back to the embassy with a driver, which was about a mile away where we had two secretaries standing by. We'd go into the bubble, and they would type up my verbatim account of the discussion, and Tommy's interpretation. This would take maybe an hour, and then I would take those two papers, get back in the car and go back to Spaso. This time we'd have a drink together, and Tommy would review them, and say, fine. He'd make a few changes here and there, I'd get back in the car, back to the embassy, and they'd go off Flash/Eyes Only for the President and the Secretary of State. We sent six pairs of telegrams like that in this time. It was very exciting.

And one time, after the third meeting, and I'll go back to those meetings in a minute, I came down and there was no car at Spaso. I called the embassy and I couldn't get an answer, so there was no transportation. So, I took these two drafts in my pocket and I walked the one mile from Spaso knowing...at first I was really nervous thinking, what the hell should I do and I decided, damn it, they'll follow me closely and I'm probably going to be safer making this walk than any time in my life. It was very cold, this was in February, the snow was scrunching under my shoes, and I was invigorated and began thinking, God, this is great drama, and I'm in the middle of it and what a lucky fellow I am, and I'm making

a contribution. I got to the embassy and we typed it up, then I got in my car and came back and we sent it out. But it was that one time, I never saw anybody, a little shadow here and there, but I know as I walked those blocks that within a half a block there were probably three or four people surrounding me with a security cocoon.

Q: What was the impression of the speech of Gromyko? When you report this back, you're not catching the body language, and expressions.

JENKINS: Oh, we did. In Tommy's interpretive telegram he referred to that, and he characterized Gromyko's performance as theatrical, dramatic, “staged,” and I think, as I recall—I'd have to get my notes out—that it was another deliberate probe of our will. A deliberate attempt to intimidate.

Q: But the important thing is that the professional diplomat was able to diffuse this issue before reporting back and scaring the bejesus out of the Kennedy team.

JENKINS: The language that Gromyko delivered was reported verbatim practically. Tommy's interpretation was also reported. Now, some people in Washington would dismiss Tommy's interpretation and be paralyzed by the threat. The President, I believe, because he had developed this confidence in Tommy, and many other people, anybody who was witting and on top of it, realized that Tommy was the best interpreter that the United States had, and that his words were extremely weighty. I think that we helped stiffen the American spine by our interpretative comments. The reaction in policy terms in Washington is reassuring in that regard. But we knew that there were people back there saying, what are we doing in Berlin? We've got to get out of Berlin, this is crazy. We're jeopardizing the United States' security by this. Why are we there? This is a beachhead, we shouldn't be there. Let's withdraw. There are a lot of people going that way, and they were on both sides of the political aisle. You know, this bully is threatening me, we've got to stand up and whip him. So we always felt this was always in the balance, and the

Russians clearly felt that way. They wouldn't have gone through all this if they'd known for sure it was going to be counterproductive.

Q: I must say, I think almost always in the profession, never felt that World War III was going to start over Asia or some other place like that. If it's ever going to happen, it was going to be over Berlin.

JENKINS: Well, it's interesting. Those of us who had been in Berlin, especially me, I guess some people didn't agree with me perhaps, always felt that World War III could start by miscalculation anywhere, but especially in Berlin. But that in terms of a calculated military engagement, there was no risk at all. Our real danger was to make sure that the Soviets didn't misinterpret our anguish, intellectual approach, and massaging as weakness. But they did frequently, as we saw. Khrushchev in Vienna misinterpreted Kennedy's performance as weakness. It was just his intellectual approach to things: they can't be black and white. But in Berlin, one of the rare occasions in my career, it was pure black and white. And I reflected that and Tommy reflected that in his own very quiet way.

Q: Was there ever a concern...I mean I used to kind of feel this in my gut that the real problem in Berlin was that maybe the Germans in East Germany might take something to the wrong hands, and the West Germans might get involved, and all of a sudden we would find ourselves...

JENKINS: ...drawn into something.

Q: ...essentially with an East German revolt which we couldn't contain.

JENKINS: Well, that was always a possibility, but I think we always felt that the West Germans were basically frightened. Adenauer was trying to cut deals with East Germans long before we indicated any flexibility. Brandt was better. Brandt was very strong in Berlin as a mayor. When he became chancellor, that seemed to dissipate considerably. But I think we, both in Berlin where we regarded the Germans almost as ploys in this whole

thing, and in Moscow where the German embassy was weak (Kastl was strong but his ambassador was an ego-maniac). The German Ambassador thought he could seduce Khrushchev by being nice to him. Khrushchev played him like a fiddle. I don't think we ever felt that the German card would ever get out in front of our negotiations because we and the Soviets were both so focused on them, we weren't going to let that happen. I mean, there was an East German revolt, the refugee flow, and they put the fence up. We didn't fight that. That's an example. We weren't going to start World War III over East German attitudes, human rights in East Germany. If we were going to start World War III it was going to be because the Russians were deliberately trying to abolish our rights in Berlin. And as long as we drew that line, and made it clear, they respected it, and there wasn't going to be a world war. All the East Germans in East Germany wanted to either riot, or flee.

Q: Did the Berlin wall happen while you were there?

JENKINS: No. It didn't happen while I was in Berlin. It did happen while I was in Moscow. The Cuban missile crisis happened shortly after I got back to the Department. The wall went up while I was in Moscow.

We would get our Quadripartite team together, share telegrams with them. The interpretative ones we didn't always share, but the factual reports we did, and we shared our instructions with them each time. The western press was all over us. When we'd walk out of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Marvin Kalb, Semore Topping, and UPI, were right there taking notes. This was the Berlin access crisis, and the world all thought we were close to World War III.

Q: When you came away from the performance of Gromyko, did we just walk out and say, no comment.

JENKINS: We went out the door and said, we'll report your views back to our government, we regret this was necessary, and we left. Now, Gromyko called us in for another meeting

a week later, in the meantime we had another set of instructions, of course, which were very strong. We presented our instructions. The Russians rebutted them, and we went back to another round. We ended up with the Russians agreeing that there had to be a formulation. They essentially folded in front of our stern refusal to back down. They didn't give up their theoretical position, but in terms of practice they agreed to stop harassing our access. There was a Quadripartite working group set up to consider access problems after that. But basically Khrushchev backed off, and that phase of the Berlin crisis ended. It was very exciting and Tommy was a real hero. It was the high point of my diplomatic career.

Q: Were you in Berlin when the wall went up?

JENKINS: No, I was in Moscow.

Q: Did we see this as almost a backing down? In other words they weren't going to go for the whole hog.

JENKINS: Yes, that was one interpretation of it. There was a big policy battle going on within the west, mostly within the United States, with those who said we should never have accepted the wall, that our access to East Berlin as opposed to our access to Berlin generally, was a violation of the Quadripartite agreement on Berlin. General Clay was sent in at that time to reassure the Berlin population that accepting the wall didn't mean that we were abandoning Berlin. We were constantly trying to make sure that we didn't lose this confrontation by losing the Berliners. If they gave up and started fleeing to the West, which they could do, the Russians would have picked up Berlin. So we were trying to stiffen their confidence. We regarded the Wall going up as a step short of trying to get all of Berlin. That was part of the back down. Yes, I had never quite said it that way, but you're absolutely right.

A number of interesting anecdotes in this time in Moscow. I attended public lectures frequently. I went to one at a higher military education school in Moscow, which was sort of like the War College. They would advertise once a month a public lecture at the academy.

And almost everybody there was in uniform, and I went with my British counterpart to two of these. Everybody got very excited when we walked in. An officer rushed up to the speaker and pointed to us, etc. They went ahead as they're programmed to do. One of them was a speech on Germany and Berlin. It was full of denunciations and the failures of the imperialists in Germany, and how the German population was being exploited by the capitalists, etc. These officers would then stand up in the audience and say, “I was stationed in East Germany. I've been to West Berlin. I've seen Germany. If Germany is in such terrible shape, and the West German government is so bad, and the Americans are so bad, why is the standard of living so much higher in West Germany than it is in East Germany? Which in turn is so much higher than it is here.” The speakers would get very nervous. They knew we were watching this, and the officers knew that we were there, and they were in a sense recording this. Frequently these public lectures would break down into total disorder, almost chaos, because the crowd would hoot at these people. And that was very interesting, very insightful as the real attitudes of Soviets.

We had a lot of very interesting colleagues in Moscow. Generally speaking foreign countries sent their most qualified professionals there. I had this great working group on Berlin, for example, but we also worked hard to entertain ourselves. We had a dacha out in the country which belonged to the ambassador obviously, but it was there for all the embassy to use. And one day Ambassador Thompson had a party with a lot of westerners, and the new Brazilian ambassador (who subsequently became Foreign Minister). He had just arrived and was invited to the party. We had a soccer game. And, of course, the Brazilians are all big soccer fans, and he got in the middle of it. Our Naval Attach# was dribbling the ball down this very rough field, and the Brazilian ambassador came in to try to take it away and the Naval Attach# gave it a boot and caught the Brazilian ambassador's leg and broke it. Of course, he was in great pain. I drove him back in to his embassy and got the American embassy doctor (We had a doctor in the embassy.) He was put in a splint and eventually flown out to Helsinki, to be taken care of.

But on the way going back in the car, he was sitting there with tears coming down his face it hurt so much, and I was trying to comfort him, and assure him that everything was going to be fine, etc. He looked over with a sort of sick smile on his face, and said, “It hurts like hell,” but he said, “it guarantees that even though I've only been here a week, tomorrow I will be a hero in Brazil.” “Ambassador breaks leg in soccer game with Americans.” A great guy.

We had a lot of action with the Indians and the Egyptians, and others of the third world. They were always in touch with a different set of Soviets, and Western defectors. There was a colony of people, international Marxists in Moscow, Burgess and McLean were part of this.

Q: The two British defectors.

JENKINS: Right. And Alfred Gonzales, my counterpart at the Indian Embassy, was a great friend of mine. He was very sharp-tongued, British educated, teasing in his pronouncements. Personally, we were very good friends, and he was crazy about my wife. When I would take a trip, he'd always invite my wife, “C”, to bridge and dinner. He would have people like Wilford Burchett and McLean for this bridge party, with my wife, which was so interesting. Wilford Burchett was an Australian journalist, who covered the Korean War from the North Korean side, and was sympathetic to the North Korean side. He was at this point stationed in Moscow, and not allowed to go back to Australia. Certainly McLean wasn't welcomed anywhere else. So my wife would play bridge with these guys and come back full of interesting information. One, she was charming, and two, she was smart and fun to be with and they just talked a lot to her because they were starved for conversation. That was all very interesting.

My Australian colleagues were terrific fellows generally. Rob Lowrie was an especially close friend who went on to become ambassador to Poland. Then a man who subsequently became Australian Minister of Defense, who was an extremely left-wing

Laborite, came out to replace the first secretary. He had an American wife, who was also a very left-wing Marxist, and we couldn't “educate” them. It was very frustrating because we kept saying, this is what's going to happen, you can't do this. He said, “I'm going to have a big party. All my new friends are going to come.” So he invited 20 or 30 of us, and about 50 Soviets. One showed up. We had warned him that nobody would come, and if they did it would just be the KGB to come watch the rest of us. And that's exactly what happened. He began to get educated in this process, but he was very cocky and he had a lot to learn.

Another funny event occurred when the President of Ecuador visited; a new president who was an alcoholic and very left-wing. The Soviets really went after him because they were trying everyplace to build new outposts, and they made great progress with this fellow. He bought MiGs, and invited Russian military advisers in, etc. He came to Moscow on a state visit. He wasn't important enough to spend all his time with Khrushchev, but he did meet with Khrushchev and there was a picture in Pravda, etc. He was staying at the Sovietskaya Hotel, which was one of the prominent, seedy establishments, but all hotels were seedy. This was reserved for VIPs. Later I stayed there when I was negotiating with them on trade with Harriman. But we would go there for dinner sometimes because the restaurants for foreigners tended to be better than the other restaurants. This was a party for Frank Meehan who was leaving to go to Berlin, and the Tretwells, and the Meehans and the Jenkins, and key colleague Sam and Mary Wise were all together. We were having drinks—the vodka was always good, we always got a lot of caviar which was magnificent, and a lot of cashews. Usually you couldn't eat the meat but you'd drank so much vodka and caviar you didn't care. We had a good time, and we were in very gay spirits, when lo and behold at a big table next to us here's the bloody Ecuadorian president, and his entourage of Ecuadorians. There were about six with him, and four KGB goons who were in charge of taking care of him. Their job obviously was to get him drunk, and then get him some women, and tuck him away for the night, which was his lifestyle. So we're sitting there at the next table. Mary Tretwell, John's wife, had been raised in the Philippines (her father was an ex-pat), and she spoke fluent Spanish. She

was also a stunning girl, tall, black hair and it was sort of tight on her head, and she had big eyes, and she was a great girl, a terrific personality (still is). We're sitting there, and my wife was cute, Meehan's wife was cute, Mary Wise was adorable, so we had four good looking women at our table, Mary particularly. The Ecuadorian was very interested in all of this, and was sort of ogling the girls all the time. And at one point, right out of the blue, I mean nobody prompted her to do this, Mary turned to one of the Ecuadorians who was there, and in fluent Spanish said, “I do hope you're having a good time, this is a rather boring hotel.” They got up from the table, came over and joined our table, all clustered around Mary, and the KGB goons were frantic. It didn't ever lead to anything except a lot of drinking at the restaurant but it was a lot of fun.

Q: Did you have any problems with the KGB trying to set you up, or anything like that?

JENKINS: We had a lot of first stage confrontations. When I traveled, for example, which I did I think six times in two years, and I went to various regions of the Soviet Union. Invariably, on the train or in the hotel, there would be some bimbo come up and brush against me, and ask if I would buy her a drink, and that sort of thing. It was never too aggressive, it was always just probing a little bit. They had an eye, and they were very clever for marriages that were in trouble. And Moscow was a tremendous pressure cooker, and if you didn't have a solid marriage, it would really come unglued there. Or it would be made solid. And some of our people had marital problems, and inevitably they would get targeted for a more serious approach.

We had a friend who was a single woman, UPI reporter, Eileen Mosley, who was the number two person there, and a great girl, very bright, very attractive, nice, good Russian. They set her up. They drugged her coffee, and then took her into a KGB office some place, took all her clothes off, and photographed her in various poses, being attacked by various men, and then sent the photographs to her and suggested that she cooperate or else they'd be sent back to headquarters. We were outraged. I was mad at the press because Henry Shapiro, who ran UPI, and who had been there forever, and who

cherished his unique contacts, exercised a veto and the press refused to report this because the rule was that if anybody was going to report on the activities of another newspaper, that newspaper had to concur. It's a logical enough rule, I guess, but in this case we found it very upsetting. We felt that story should have been blown sky high to teach the Russians not to do that anymore. But it wasn't, and Eileen was shipped out, and that was the end of it. I never trusted or liked Henry Shapiro. He was a very wise man, knew a great deal, but he had so much invested in his unique post that he didn't want to jeopardize it.

Q: This is always a problem when somebody feels they have something, they can be used.

JENKINS: That's right. They can be exploited, and the KGB was extremely clever about that. A great book has been written about the Wennerstrom case, the Swedish military attach# in Moscow, who was not there when I was there, who was seduced on an ego basis, not on women, not money, not drink. They persuaded him that he was going to be a key player in saving the world from World War III. They gave him all kinds of things, and information, and he passed it, and he became a two-way viaduct, and they got him hooked. He came to the United States as Swedish military attach#, and of course we treated the Swedes as NATO members practically, and he fed all kinds of stuff back to the Soviets. Eventually he was caught in Sweden, he was convicted. An Englishman wrote a very good book, Agent of Choice. It reflected how sophisticated the KGB was in exploiting psychological frailties.

The German ambassador, who was such an ego-manic, was named Kroll, he was a politician, not a career man.

Oh, I know one other thing, a high point in my time in Moscow. While I was there, John J. McCloy came to Moscow. He became essentially the arms control spokesman for the administration. He was a very prominent man having been High Commissioner in

Germany, etc. He came out to Moscow with a very high powered delegation to initiate what became the beginning of the arms control dialogue, it was called the McCloy Zorin talks, Zorin being the ambassador on the Russian side who was McCloy's counterpart. Gromyko served as Zorin's deputy in these talks. McCloy had Butch Fisher, the legal adviser from the State Department, as his deputy. But there were several other people on the team: Hal Sonnenfeldt was one. We had Dick Gardner who is now ambassador in Spain, who was a UN expert. A fellow named Tom Wolfe, who was an Air Force colonel, who was extremely competent on weapons systems. And I was part of that delegation. We met with Zorin and his delegation a half a dozen times and we reached an agreement. It was the first step, and it had to do with testing, and exchange of information. It was the first step in a series of negotiations which culminated with SALT II. McCloy was impressive. While he was there in the middle of the negotiations Khrushchev took him down to Crimea for a weekend with his daughter. They had a family weekend together, and he came back with very interesting information from Khrushchev which underlined the fact that Khrushchev did indeed want serious arms control negotiations. The Russians were very tough negotiators, but McCloy was extremely capable, a very bright man. And Butch was brilliant, and it was a very interesting thing for me, and I stayed involved in arms control issues throughout my career, never in the center, never full time, but I did a lot of speaking on behalf of the SALT agreement around the country when we had trouble getting it confirmed, etc. I would say the Berlin and arms control were the two big issues for me.

I covered Latin America as well. Frank Meehan did the NATO and African issues, and Culver did the China, Vietnam and Laos issues. We all had things we had to read because the Soviet position was always reflected to some degree in their publications. We read provincial papers when we could get them whenever we traveled because you've got a different story there. They were telling their people out in the country-side something that they didn't want people in Moscow to read. We monitored their TV programs, we went to the theater, we traveled and talked to people on trains and in hotels whenever we could. And we developed, I think, better than any other embassy, a real flow of material from

within Russia, and it was certainly never just the newspapers, but they were an important part of it.

Q: Was Brezhnev a figure at all at that time?

JENKINS: Yes, he was the number two man. He was regarded as something of a puppet for Khrushchev. Khrushchev was very rude, and even crude, about people around him. He was always putting people down, and ridiculing them, and demonstrating publicly that he was in charge. And he treated Brezhnev like a puppet. We were never that impressed with him. Tommy thought Polansky was going to be the next leader. He, of course, came a cropper in the agriculture arena. I don't know what has ever happened to him. Gromyko survived through all of them. Mikoyan survived through all of them.

Q: One last thing. You mentioned that you were involved with Harriman at one point.

JENKINS: Well, I was. This was back in the Department and we got into negotiations with the Russians on the air agreement. However, departing from Moscow was a genuine emotional wrench. I remember we flew back on KLM to Amsterdam and then picked up PanAmerican to the United States, 1962 in September. We got out to the airport, a lot of farewell parties. A very intense effort was made to entertain ourselves collectively. I'm sure this was true when you were in Belgrade too. Costume parties, and the girls all got very fancy.

Q: We skinny-dipped in the ambassador's pool when he was away.

JENKINS: There was a lot of that, and everybody had a lot of intensity. But there was a special camaraderie. We left with very heavy hearts because we loved all the people that were there. We knew that this was a high point in our relationship, and although we have stayed friends with all of them to one degree or another, it never is quite the same.

But we got on that KLM plane and it was just marvelous. The dog was in the hold in his box, and the three boys were taken up front by the airline hostesses and entertained while we sat back in our seats, my wife and I, and had about four martinis apiece while we flew to Amsterdam. Although we had known Amsterdam it seemed such a beautiful city. It was before the days of graffiti, I might add. It just hit us with such an onrush. We had gone outside to Copenhagen on a vacation one summer for two weeks, but other than that we were in the Soviet Union non-stop, and it was a big, big event in our lives. We all lost weight, because we were strung out, but we were all on a high because we were doing such exciting and important things. And the people around us were all such great people. We didn't know it at the time, but the CIA station people, and we knew who two or three of them were, but there were some we didn't know like Alex Davidson the doctor who took care of the Brazilian ambassador. He was an Air Force first lieutenant, or captain. It turned out five years later when we read the Penkovsky papers, that Alex was one of the key contacts. And one of our great British friends was the man in charge of Penkovsky, and it was his wife who pushed the baby buggy in which Penkovsky would drop his documents. We knew them well and had a lot of fun with them socially, and had no idea that was going on. We were as close to the intelligence activities in the embassy as any non-intelligence member, but that was so well done, and so professionally done, I've great admiration for the way the agency guys did that, and the way the British people did it.

We played tennis in a British embassy tennis court, and we had squash at the Indian embassy in the dead of winter. The place would be at zero where we were playing, the ball was dead as a rock and we'd go down there and drink three cognacs apiece, and then start playing, and by the end of the first set we were down to T-shirts. That was fun.

Q: Maybe we should stop, what do you think?

JENKINS: I could go another half hour if that's alright, maybe wrap it up.

Q: Well, you went back to the Soviet desk, is that right?

JENKINS: That's right, and that was an interesting three years.

Q: '62 to '65.

JENKINS: That's right, and I was on the internal side—we had multilateral and bilateral. John Guthrie and Dave Henry ran the office of Soviet Affairs. I had discreet responsibilities for two or three specific projects, and I found that very interesting. I had wanted to be in multilateral because that's what I had been doing, but the Department in its wisdom moved me to internal and I found myself dealing with a whole different array of subjects, most importantly the bilateral air agreement between Moscow and Washington, and the consular convention. I initiated the consular convention idea. The air agreement had been signed the year before and was not working. I picked that up not as the initiator, but the State Department representative dealing with Najeeb Halaby who was the head of the FAA. He was the point man on it. Harriman was very interested in both of those, and we reported to Harriman and Llewellyn Thompson on these things. Tommy, a year after I got back, was brought back and became Counselor of the Department, and oversaw everything to do with the Soviet Union. I continued to work with him a little bit on the Berlin issue then, but by that time it had moved into a much broader, almost plateaued, and wasn't as dangerous as it had been. He was personally involved in the Cuban missile crisis. He was part of “Ex Com.” He was in fact the key voice. He's the one who designed the final blockade package which was consistent with his principle, don't ever back the Soviets into a corner, always give them a door to get out. And he did that and gave them the way to get out. He proposed the package where the U.S. would take down the Thor missiles in Turkey in exchange for the Soviets pulling their missiles out of Cuba. We were going to take the obsolete Thors out anyhow, but it gave Khrushchev a face-saving device. I was really in Washington no more than a note-taker for him, whereas in Moscow I had been very heavily in the substance.

Q: There's a difference being in Washington.

JENKINS: That's right, and I was a mere FSO-3 at that point, or 4. But I was able to carve out a couple of things for myself that became important. The air agreement negotiations were very interesting. We had signed an agreement with the Soviets to allow them to land in New York and Washington in exchange for which we landed in Moscow. PanAm was the U.S. designated carrier. The Soviets had aircraft problems because their planes were too noisy, and they didn't have the right safety equipment. And they weren't giving us the kind of service and facilities in Moscow that they had promised. So Halaby put together a team, and I was the State Department rep reporting to Harriman who kept the overview on this issue for the whole government. We finally decided we had to go to Moscow, and there had to be a meeting between Halaby and Loginov who was the minister of aviation. He was an air force general. Jeeb is a pilot, a terrific guy, I liked him very much. We flew out and went through Frankfurt, then Denmark. In Copenhagen we picked up the two Soviet navigators. We were on the FAA-1 plane which was an executive jet and it couldn't fly all the way across the Atlantic, we had to go through Greenland and Iceland, and Thule. And that was all very interesting because we'd meet with the FAA representatives. They'd all come together and Jeeb would give a pep rally speech; he was magnificent, I must say. It was a great experience, and fun to go that way.

But as we left Copenhagen and started in towards Moscow we hit the Baltic coast. The Soviet navigators who were supposed to be bilingual in English, were unable to explain to Jeeb what they wanted him to do. He was piloting himself, though he had an FAA co-pilot. He very much wanted to fly into Sheremetyevo and land the plane, and then go into Loginov and say, “I landed here.” He's a real hot-pilot personality. But about ten minutes into Soviet air space, Jeeb got on the loud speaker (I'm in the eighth seat back in this ten-seat plane), and he said, “Jenkins, get up here right away.” So I went up into the cockpit where the two navigators were sitting behind the two pilots. I squatted down on my knees in between them—the four of them, in the center of the four of them. And Halaby said, “I can't understand what this guy is trying to tell me. He keeps pointing at things, but I don't get it.” And, of course, I spoke Russian, I was recently out of our Moscow embassy, but

I didn't speak “aviation Russian”—its a different vocabulary. So it was a pretty nervous period, but they would tell me and I would tell Jeeb what I thought they were trying to say, and he would say, “They must mean so-and-so.” So then I'd go back to them, and try to explain to them what Jeeb thought they meant, and get them to confirm it. And that's the way we flew into Sheremetyevo. It was pretty “hairy.” We arrived and, of course, we went into the negotiations with Loginov.

One of the things that the Soviets wanted was...they had the largest plane in the world. It had eight engines, and I forget the designation. It was a TU-142 or something, and it was a big plane, it wasn't wide-bodied, but it was huge. They wanted to be the biggest, and the best always, and this was their aviation bid. They wanted to fly this damn plane to the United States because they'd get a lot of publicity. Jeeb insisted that there wasn't any way in the world they were going to sign off on licensing this plane to land in the United States unless he flew it first. Well, they weren't going to let him fly it because it was a brand new plane, and they weren't sure all the bugs were out, and he said, “Well, if I don't get to fly it, it doesn't go.”

So we went back and forth with Loginov in the negotiations. Of course, we made our presentation in English, it would be translated, and then the Russians would come back in Russian. As I heard the Russians, it was clear that Loginov was being urged by his advisor, “For Christ's sake, let him fly the plane. We want to get it in there.” And Loginov was beginning to back off, and all of a sudden it looked like Jeeb was going to give up. So I interceded with him, and said, “Look, I can tell you they are about to give you what you want, don't back off, you'll get it.” And, of course, he didn't back off, and we did get it and he flew it, and it was a terrible experience! The plane was very hard to fly, Jeeb said, “I damned near crashed the thing because you could barely turn it.” It took two people, it was a huge big flying boxcar. So we didn't license it even though Halaby flew it. Eventually it was allowed to fly in, after they installed a lot of hydraulic controls which they hadn't

had before then. We eventually let it fly to Dulles a couple times, but it never became the principal carrier.

The other issue was the consular convention. I sat in internal affairs with all of the consular problems we had with the Soviets. While I was there, e.g., a history professor from Yale named Freddy Barghoorn, who was well known to Tommy and to all of us in the Soviet field at that time (which was very small in the academic world, knew one another, and we were all close). Freddy had been in the government once a long time ago, in research. But he was a professor at Yale, he knew Kennedy from school connections. So when the KGB grabbed him it quickly became a crisis. He was visiting in Moscow. He was on his way to visit somebody at a hotel. Two Russians came up and bought him a drink, and then handed him some things, including a role of industrial plans, as it turned out. Then they arrested him with the plans in his arms. It was a total put-up job. They accused him of espionage. These were plans for an air base. So Freddy was spirited off, and he didn't show up for dinner with our DCM at the embassy (who was Ed Friers at that time). Nobody could figure out what had happened to him. Finally three days later we found out that he was in jail. And we raised holy hell. With that in mind when I got back to the Department, I decided we should go after a consular convention, which spells out that if you arrest any American, within 24 hours there has to be notification, and within three days there has to be visitation. There had never been a treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union at that point, and this consular treaty would then have unusual significance. The Russians predictably were excited about having a treaty with the United States. The political significance of doing this, the recognition of their illicit regime, was very important to them. Thus, I thought we had enough leverage to get them to make these exceptions.

So we opened negotiations. A fellow named John Harris from the Legal Office who was the legal expert on consular conventions, and I, sent a stream of negotiating telegrams to Mac Toon, who was our Moscow DCM at that point. Malcolm Toon whom you may have known in Yugoslavia. Anyway, Mac was running it out in Moscow. They would go in and negotiate with the Soviet Foreign Ministry on the basis of our instructions,

and report back. This went on for eight months or so. Each paragraph, each chapter was a big hassle. The key at the end was access and notification. They had taken the position that if somebody breaks the law in the Soviet Union, “we will let you know when we think it is appropriate,” and that could be six months. And they wouldn't give in on this, they said Soviet law doesn't permit us to give you what you want. Well, I knew from the German embassy (Bernd von Staden was the first secretary here then, he subsequently became ambassador here. He was a good friend of mine). I got all the German consular conventions with Moscow. They had a string of them dating back. And there had been cases under previous German consular conventions where they had access and notification specified. It was usually a phrase like “rapidly” or “as fast as possible.” But I wanted one day and three days specified.

Finally Toon became frustrated because the agreement was all ready to be signed except for this point. And he sent a cable back (Mac prided himself on being a tough guy) saying, “We're never going to get it that way, this is a good agreement. Let's agree on this.” I wrote a first person cable for Secretary Rusk to the embassy saying, “I don't care if we have to wait until hell freezes over, there will be no consular convention unless it specifies one day notification, three days access, and you are instructed to inform the Soviets to this effect.” Toon came back with a telegram saying, “You're kissing this thing goodbye, we had an agreement. It was the first agreement, it would have been important.” He had developed a little localitis on this subject. We held our ground, they folded, we got the consular convention, and I'm very proud of that.

So then comes the question—it's a treaty, it has to be ratified by the Senate. We had to appear before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Fulbright and Sparkman were there, and Harriman was the witness. Harriman had approved the negotiation each step of the way. He was very tough, and very good. However, it was the first treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States, and all sorts of anti-communist currents were in play. Why are we doing this, we're giving the Russians something. But Harriman spelled it out: “We are achieving something we've never had before, it gives us the ability to

really protect American citizens." "How do you know they will adhere to it?" "If they don't adhere to it they're breaking a treaty, and they'll pay a big price for that in terms of public image, etc., and I'm confident if they sign it, they'll do it." He said very little. They'd ask him questions, and he'd sit there and answer, "Yup" or "Nope."

Q: Who is this?

JENKINS: Harriman. We left after an hour, I don't think he spent more than ten minutes talking. All the rest of it were the Senators trying to draw him out on things. He was very uncommunicative. I didn't say anything obviously, except when he turned to me and asked me to say something. Going back in the car, I said, "Governor, that was the damnest performance I've ever seen, you didn't tell those guys anything." And he said, "That was deliberate. You wait and see, this thing will pass. This is one of those situations where if you give them anything they'll chew on it and turn it against you." He said, "I wasn't about to tell those bastards anything." Sure enough, it did pass. Dirksen was there. I liked Dirksen. I had met him in Bangkok, and he was very nice to me.

Q: You were there in Washington during the Cuban missile crisis.

JENKINS: That's right, and I had no play in that, which was very frustrating because I regarded that as an extension of the Berlin crisis. It was an unhappy period in my career in many ways. My boys were doing well in school, and we lived in a nice little house in Wood Acres, and I dealt extensively with the Soviet embassy here, and I made friends with two or three Soviets and had them out to the house a lot. I wheeled and dealed as much as I could, and I got very much involved with the German embassy, and the British embassy. But I wasn't doing the things which I thought were really important like the Cuban missile crisis. Moscow had spoiled me.

Q: Were you there on the Soviet desk, Soviet affairs, when Khrushchev was overthrown? Or was he still in charge?

JENKINS: I don't remember when that date occurred. I certainly remember the event, but I don't know where I was when it happened. But I was not involved in it.

Q: What was the general feeling from the State Department in the Soviet affairs?

JENKINS: About the change?

Q: About what the Soviets were after. We had gone through the Berlin thing, and then there had been the Cuban missile crisis, and then you had almost three years after that when you were watching. What did we think the Soviets were up to?

JENKINS: We felt that Khrushchev was a true trail blazer in terms of internal liberalization. It wasn't dramatic by western standards, but within the Soviet framework, the things that he permitted to happen were very dramatic. And we all believed that those were the first steps, that they were irreversible, that this process of the ice thawing, and the river beginning to flow, was never going to turn around.

Secondly, we felt that he was, for reasons we didn't understand, a very dangerous man. He was a hip-shooter, a gambler, and whereas Stalin, and subsequently Brezhnev, would never take a risk when there was a chance that we might in fact strike in reaction. Khrushchev did it regularly. He was constantly testing our will, and gambling that we wouldn't react. So we felt that in the mold of Soviet leadership, Khrushchev was a dangerous man, and he was well gone. He was actually overthrown because of his humiliation over Berlin, Cuba, and maybe more importantly, his fiasco in the New Lands agricultural program. Those were the three most important things, as revealed in the documents about his overthrow. They emerged in the speeches and Sovietologists were able to analyze that. I don't think there's any debate about that.

We didn't think that Brezhnev was going to be as weak as he turned out to be. We thought he might be a plus, less adventurous than Khrushchev, but equally committed to internal reform. It turned out that he was less committed to internal reform. The KGB ran wild

under him. But he was much more cautious internationally. He did things like the invasion of Czechoslovakia (which occurred in '68 when I got back from Venezuela). And some people might say that that was dangerous, but it wasn't dangerous. It was clear in his mind that he could do what he wanted within the realm of his empire. It was embarrassing, and it backfired, but it was not so dangerous. So that's what we felt about that.

Let me quickly switch off to Venezuela, because we're going to run out of time. I went down to Venezuela...one of the things I did on the desk, was design a plan to assign Russian specialists, Moscow hands, to other places in the world where Soviet activities were important. We ended up with some six designated posts: New Delhi was one, and in many ways the most important, Roger Kirk went there. I had my choice really, because I set the program up, and I was tempted to go to New Delhi but the schools were bad there at that time, and my three boys were getting to the point where schooling was important. So I chose Venezuela because the schools were the best there, and I had spoken Spanish in college. We sent Joe Norbury to Chile, Jack Scanlan went to Uruguay, Morrie went to Mexico. There, e.g., were 400 Soviets in the embassy in Montevideo. They ran Soviet efforts in Latin America, so we had somebody down there. Of course, the agency had people in all these places but their objectives were different than ours. And it upset the Soviets that we did this, it was effective, it was a good program, it was a good idea.

In Venezuela, I originally became the number two man in the embassy political section, and then I became political counselor, and that was fascinating. It was a time of President Leone, and the communist terrorists were trying to overthrow the government. The day we arrived there were 21 traffic policemen who were machine gunned and wounded around the city. A lot of terrorism. We had very extensive security considerations. My predecessor, Ted Long's house had been attacked. He'd been tied up in his house, and they spray-painted his house inside with communist slogans. So there was that pressure. But it was a happy time in many ways. My boys all played tennis at the Venezuela Club and became national champions in Venezuela. The ambassador, Maury Bernbaum, was a wonderful

man; Frank Herren, the deputy, was an old Latin American type. Instead of resenting my out of area expertise, they used me, and pushed me.

Q: Did you find in dealing with the ARA, that they really needed this...

JENKINS: Yes,...outside area, that's right. No question about it, that was a Kissinger doctrine, and it was the right doctrine, and Bernbaum and Herren, to their credit, accepted it with enthusiasm. I arrived down there as a total outsider with high school Spanish, I did pick it up quickly. But, you know, I didn't have anything like the area experience that they did. Maury Bernbaum was another great ambassador, a marvelous man and steeped in Latin America. And Frank Herren was also a marvelous man, they were great guys to work with, and they gave me my head and I got a lot done, had a lot of fun. We turned around the military assistance program and got it much more focused on counter-terrorism, and less traditional navy activities. I knew all the politicians. We were accepted by the opposition as well as the government, and we were able to develop a much more anti-Moscow attitude within the labor government in power.

Q: How did that happen?

JENKINS: Well, I befriended all these men with the help of Maury and Frank. They were all very interested in my Moscow experience. I set up a channel where Bill Luers, who took my place in Moscow, was sending me materials from the Soviet press about Venezuela which denounced the Venezuelans as a bunch of lackeys. I was putting this in the Venezuelan press. The government loved that. They also had the Cuban terrorists land on the beach that we were involved in. Sol Linowitz came over as the OAS ambassador in charge of an OAS delegation to interrogate these eight Cubans who'd landed with weapons. I was Sol's adviser in that operation. Venezuelan politicians had a lot of confidence in the three of us. We entertained them a lot. I ate lunch virtually every day with a government official or parliamentarian.

They ended up having a lot of confidence in the American embassy, and that's to Maury's great tribute. I got a huge bonus from the fact that my three little boys were Venezuelan national champions, and written up in the sports pages of the papers. The Venezuelans really were impressed with that. We were members of Venezuelan clubs, and my wife and I both spoke pretty good Spanish, the boys were all bilingual. The whole embassy was strong. It was a good embassy, high quality people, and a great ambassador. So we had a lot of influence. We had a lot more influence than, I think, our embassies in most countries. The oil issue was a big issue, and Maury was a great expert on that question.

Q: How did you view the Venezuelan government?

JENKINS: We liked the Leone government. We were very close to them. We also liked the Caldera party which was in opposition. They were all people who had been heroes in getting rid of Perez Jimenez, the military dictator, and they had had three democratic elections in a row. The first time in the history of Venezuela they'd ever had democratic elections, and they had actually changed party once, then changed it back again. So we were very enthusiastic about the Venezuelans, and we thought that inevitably Venezuela would succeed. They were building a middle class which was substantial. I still have Venezuelan friends. A lot of them educated in the United States, a large cadre of U.S. educated Venezuelans. And they were all torn, it was a love-hate relationship. They loved the United States, but they criticized us a lot.

We went through an earthquake there, which was an unforgettable experience. We were on the eighth floor of an apartment building. Six hundred people died in this earthquake in Caracas. My wife had just had a cancer operation and it was our first party, and we were on the balcony having martinis, as was our wont when we were young, and it was spilling out of the glass, and I was holding it upright. The building had tipped, and the building next door went down and a couple hundred people died in it. So it was very scary, and upsetting, and an unforgettable experience.

Caracas was also a sad place for me because my wife was so sick there, and we returned home in 1968. I never went abroad again, and she subsequently died of cancer two years later.

I was to go into the War College, my picture was in the book and everything else, and I was nervous because I would have had to travel a lot in the War College and my wife, “C”, was not well, the cancer had returned. When Pic Littell and Dick Davies invited me to USIA to be a deputy assistant director, I took it.

Q: Why don't we work at that, because looking at the time and I think we might talk about working with USIA.

JENKINS: Okay, I can do that. I had five years there. After the first year I was promoted to be the assistant director, the area director for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. It was absolutely fascinating. I had about 100 people working for me overseas in that area, all the PAOs, and the cultural and press officers. We ran an exhibits program which every other year put an exhibit into the Soviet Union for eight months. It was seen by more than a million Soviets. And we designed the themes, and selected and trained the guides, some of whom have gone on to be Foreign Service officers and Russian specialists. When the Czech invasion occurred right after I got to USIA, I was part of the inter-agency group (Mac Toon was chairing it). At that point he was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State. We tried to figure out what we could do to deflect the Brezhnev doctrine from spreading. We knew we couldn't do anything about Prague, and that was very sad. We were not pleased with the uncertain reaction of the U.S. at that time but it probably on balance was the best that could be done. But we did look around for ways to send the message to the world, and to the Soviets, and Brezhnev, that they better not try this anywhere else. The danger was in Yugoslavia, which Khrushchev had relinquished, but which was always a bone in the Soviet throat. They wanted it back obviously. And Austria, one-fourth of which had been part of the Soviet empire. We weren't at all sure that it wasn't going to spread.

So there was a sense of panic in the face of the Brezhnev doctrine in Washington. I designed a USIA plan to plant the U.S. flag as much as we could throughout the area by establishing several cultural centers. We opened a big cultural center in Bucharest which is still today being visited by roughly a thousand Romanians a day. We opened up in Yugoslavia in each province a cultural center, Skopje, Sarajevo, Ljubljana, and Zagreb. We trained young USIA officers in the respective languages. I sent a young fellow named George Fornier to Skopje speaking Macedonia. This occurred about six months after the earthquake, and boy, did they love him. We planted the flag, and every place people would flock to us. We opened a consulate in Lvov in Poland, it was a big success under FSO Vic Gray, financed by my USIA budget.

I had very interesting people as USIA directors, Leonard Marks who was there for just a year, and then Frank Shakespeare came in. Frank was a real hard-line dinosaur on dealing with the Soviets. But eventually Frank came around to the fact that we could undermine Soviet power through information and sheer consumerism. That that's what USIA could do the best.

Q: When I was in Yugoslavia, we used to distribute to Soviets things that would come in, the Sears Roebuck catalog.

JENKINS: Oh, yes, that's a microcosm of what we were trying to do generally. I got the Voice to expand its hours in minority languages, and beefed that up considerably, and Frank was giving me the best people he had because he thought blocking the Soviet power was the most important thing in the world. So I had a hell of a good collection of PAOs.

Q: Why don't we pick up the next time? We can probably finish this off, I think, dealing with both USIA and Congressional relations.

JENKINS: Yes, and the year at Commerce. * * * * * Q: Today is 24th of March 1995.

You mentioned about doing minority languages. At that time what do we mean by minority languages?

JENKINS: Well, in the then Soviet Union, any language other than Russian was called, for lack of a better handle, a minority language. The Voice at that time had, it seems to me, four hours a week in Ukrainian. We had Ukrainian programs, we had programs in the Baltic languages, and programs in the Central Asian area were very weak. That's why I pushed hard to get into Kazakh, and Uzbek, etc. We had some very good people, some from Radio Liberty who had been specializing in these minority languages all along. It's a very difficult distinction to explain but there is a need, there was and still is in some cases, a need for both an official U.S. government voice, explaining our policies on world issues, and domestic developments in the United States. And, a surrogate program which is designed to provide news and developments about the Ukraine, which the Ukrainians were not getting because Radio Moscow was strictly putting out Moscow's propaganda line. This was part of our effort to undermine Moscow's hegemony over all of these areas.

Radio Liberty for years, from its inception, was designed to do exactly that kind of thing, but focus much more on gossip, and scandal, and there was much less of a control over the veracity of what they were reporting. Their staffs were composed largely of refugees from those areas. American supervision of those programs was loose, and in some cases the local services had their own agenda. It happened to usually be consistent with the American agenda, but not always. So as time went on it became necessary to tighten supervision, and to provide an official U.S. voice in those areas, such as in Uzbek, which we did. Then we had total control over what was being said, the position of the American government was being articulated. Having a surrogate station say things which were not necessarily totally consistent with the American position was then within the context, at least they knew what the U.S. government position is. Now the Soviets, of course, tried to jam all these broadcasts, and they spent a lot of money putting up transmitters, which is what you use to jam. We call them palm trees, they're great big tall towers with things

that hang down like fronds. You could see them all over Moscow, for example. And when you'd go into major cities in the minority republic capitals, you'd see them there too. But out in the countryside, of course, they couldn't do that effectively. So the Voice was getting through. Radio Liberty was getting through. They've spent more effort jamming Radio Liberty because Radio Liberty was more embarrassing to them, where we were building for the long term. So that's what I mean when I say minority broadcasts, minority language broadcasts.

One of the things I was empowered to do as the head of the policy section of USIA for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, was to try and refine, direct, hone, shift resources around to make sure we were hitting the key targets with the most effective messages. We also had—I don't know whether I mentioned this earlier in the tape—a very effective program of national exhibits. Under the exchange agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union, the Soviets for their purposes wanting to get scientists and mathematicians over to the United States for training, agreed to permit a number of other things, exchange of national magazines once a month, for example. We produced something called America, and they produced something called USSR Today. Their magazine was not well done, not well printed, and we had great difficulty getting them distributed which was our responsibility. Ours was slick, Life magazine- style type thing, it went like hot cakes all over the Soviet Union. We only were able to do 50,000 on each side because the Soviets realized that this was a potent weapon. But they did agree to an exchange of so-called National Exhibitions every two years. The exhibition would be a theme which I would choose, or my office would choose, such as recreational equipment. That sounds harmless, but in point of fact it was campers, and recreational vehicles, Kayaks, and tents, and all the things which to Russians were absolutely the most desirable items in the world. And we were able to portray a picture of the United States through this exhibition of the fulsomeness of our society, and the choices offered in terms of recreation. Each exhibition was staffed by native speaking guides. The exhibition office, when I directed it, selected 25 guides who were Russian-fluent, came from all walks of

life in the United States. They would go out with the exhibition, and stand in front of these exhibits. So we had, for example, a new Cadillac, and in front of that Cadillac—and this was at the height of the early days of the Vietnam War—I had a black female American who was fluent in Russian, standing there defending our policies in Vietnam, in Russian to Russian audiences. It just blew their minds. So we had a hell of an impact, and those exhibits would go around to five cities. The negotiation of which cities was always difficult. They always wanted you to stay in Moscow where the KGB could be all over you. And I kept insisting on going to places which were much more politically sensitive. So we ended up breaking into new areas with an American presence. Our 25 guides would be there for twelve weeks, and they really got into the community at that time, being fluent, and, of course, the Russians kept taking them home. The local KGB was apoplectic because they were trying to control all these people. There were incidents, of course, but on the whole this was an extremely valuable thing, and roughly a million and a half Soviets would see each one of these exhibits. I took Bill Buckley out, who was on the Board of Advisers...

Q: Bill Buckley is a right-wing columnist. Right-wing is the wrong term, conservative, but also very much an intellectual.

JENKINS: Very much, and he had been a strong anti-communist spokesman. And Frank Shakespeare, who was brilliant in many ways, loaded up the Advisory Board with people who were really important opinion-makers in the United States. Bill Buckley was one of those. I got to take Bill on his first trip to the Soviet Union, which he found absolutely fascinating, and came back a tremendous proponent of USIA and the State Department. It helped us a great deal down the road, on the Panama Canal treaties, and other things. As a result I had a personal friendship with him, I'm still in touch with him occasionally. He was so impressed with these guides and these exhibits, he wrote about it, he talked about it, and it was a very helpful thing. So those exhibits were a big part of our program, along with the Voice. We, of course, had cultural events going in, and we had a public affairs staff in the embassy, very good people, all Russian speakers. The University of Michigan marching band, for example, toured the Soviet Union and you can imagine the impact that

had. Benny Goodman also. There were great programs. USIA spent a good deal of money on this, but I think it was money extremely well spent, a hell of a lot less expensive than an MX missile.

Q: Were you getting reports back on how these things...were you sitting down saying, okay, this was fine, it's very popular but here is a government that is controlled from the top. What was the ultimate purpose?

JENKINS: Well, this was one of the things where I had, I thought, my most serious challenge. It was to try and bring home to Frank Shakespeare and Henry Loomis, the leadership of the agency, the fact that USIA's objective, and in the long run the most effective instrument of American policy to both contain and then subvert Soviet control, was to reach out to people and demonstrate that there were societies which were working, where choices were available, and that the West was not weak, it was strong, and they weren't ten feet tall, we were ten feet tall. We were trying to stimulate consumerism. Frank often got carried away. He always wanted to have dissenters like Sakharov on the Voice, which I felt was the wrong way to go about it. I thought Sakharov's message was getting out, we didn't have to wrap the American flag around him. What we should be talking about is how in a given year so many hundreds of thousands of new jobs were created, and each one of these people had automobiles, and houses, and that these things were available in the U.S. to workers. I subsequently found myself promoting trade and non-strategic items for the same reason. I wanted Coca Cola and Pepsi Cola in there. They were subverting Moscow's hegemony, and control. The Voice was getting through, and this constant drumbeat of the richness of western life, not only in the material sense, but in the spiritual sense, did in fact lead to undermining the regime, did stimulate a demand for a better life, did stimulate recognition of the fact that better lives exist other places which are not burdened by their crazy political system. So we were subverting Moscow's control, and that was the objective.

Q: Even there...

JENKINS: But anybody who knew the area, spoke the language, had lived there, moved around, knew that it was working. And Shakespeare, to his credit, got that message. He went there enough, he saw enough, and he began to understand that this was a very effective instrument we had there. And he became very enthusiastic about it.

Q: Was there any cooperation with the BBC? Or did they have a different message?

JENKINS: No, basically we were all involved in the same game, the BBC, DeutcheWelle, Kol Israel. And I visited all those places. I went to Israel and spent three days there with the Israelis, one, providing them with engineering assistance on how to overcome jamming, but also talking about the message. I had a lot of pressure to initiate at the Voice a Hebrew language broadcast into the Soviet Union to reach the Jewish community, and I resisted this. One, Soviet Jews didn't speak Hebrew, they spoke Yiddish if they spoke anything other than Russian.

Two, the worst thing that we could do would be to provide credibility to historic Russian charges that the Jewish community in Russia was not loyal, they weren't loyal Russians, they were in fact agents of foreign countries.

And thirdly, the Jews in the Soviet Union wanted their kids to be speaking in Russian, to get ahead. They were trying to hold on to Yiddish, but it was a losing fight. They didn't have any access to Hebrew except through Kol Israel. So Congressman Ben Rosenthal, and the so-called Jewish caucus in the House, and there are about 15 Congressmen, invited me up to the Hill. I'm in Ben's office surrounded by these guys, and they're pounding on the table saying, “You have got to initiate Hebrew broadcasts, or we're going to penalize your budget.” And I was arguing why this wasn't a good thing. They said, “Well, we'll give you six weeks, and we want to meet again in six weeks, and we want to know what you've done.” So I went to Israel, it was a stroke of genius. It just came to me out of the blue. I took a VOA engineer to help them overcome jamming. I met with the head of Kol Israel, and with the deputy Foreign Minister in charge of that part of the world,

and the man who was in charge of bringing Soviet Jews out to Israel, and the former Israeli ambassador in Moscow, etc. I told all of them about this Congressional challenge. They were all horrified. The last thing they wanted was for the VOA to start broadcasting in Hebrew, that's their language, that's their job.

So I came back loaded with this ammunition from my visit in Israel. And when the meeting occurred, Ben Rosenthal said, “Well, what have you done?” I said, “The first thing I did was go to Israel, and I met with the following people, and here are the points which they made about our activities dealing with the Jewish community in the Soviet Union.” It absolutely stunned these people. They just collapsed. We did undertake an increase in programming about Jewish activities in the United States in Russian. So we had a Jewish hour, and we increased that and gave it more wattage and it went to different places. We even put a little bit of that out to Uzbekistan because there was a small Jewish community out there which is very influential and worth reaching. So we won that battle, and it was the better part of wisdom. But it might never have happened, because we do a lot of dumb things in this country because of domestic political pressure.

Q: This was basically coming from American politicians wanting to show their Jewish constituents that they were doing something.

JENKINS: That's right. They wanted to hold up a coon's skin and say, here this is what I accomplished. So I gave them a coon's skin, but it wasn't the one they were talking about. It was a very successful initiative. I found that that period was extremely interesting. It was a very tense time. We really did believe that there was a good chance that the Soviets would try to go back into Yugoslavia, recapture the one country which had broken out of their empire, and that they could conceivably even reoccupy their one-third of Austria.

So there was a Task Force, Mac Toon was sort of the executive director of it, and I was the representative of USIA on the Task Force. We were all scurrying around, what can we do? And, of course, the one thing we wanted to do was move troops around, we

wanted to send another division to NATO in Europe. The Defense Department resisted any such psychological use of their divisions. They didn't want to move troops, they don't like to move troops unless they're going to be used, and it would be expensive in terms of their budget obviously, but it was a way of sending a message to Brezhnev that he better not try to go beyond Czechoslovakia. The only thing that I could offer up, was to plant the American flag in a greatly increased number of cultural centers around Eastern Europe. We all felt that the Soviets might not have gone into Hungary, for example in '56, if they had thought they would meet international resistance. Subsequent publication of documents indicate this fight did take place within the Politburo at that point.

Q: I was the political adviser to an American hospital, an Army Hospital in '64. Oh, they like Americans. Did you have trouble with the governments doing this?

JENKINS: They knew exactly what we were doing, and they were delighted to get a little bit of insurance. And secondly, as long as they could sell it to Moscow as cultural, there was no objection. Now, I staffed a lot of these places with State Department Foreign Service officers, but we had it out there, and I had a lot of trouble, I thought very pedestrian administrative leadership in the Department because they didn't like the idea of these things being opened up, they wanted to get leaner, and get down to the Ellis Briggs kind of six-man embassy. So I ended up providing USIA funding, with Shakespeare's blessing. We would take a State Department FSO, and make him in Krakow our consul, but he was really the Public Affairs officer, Victor Gray. We gave him Polish language training, sent him in there, put the flag up, and had a reading room and cultural activities, etc. And then the State Department felt they had control because their man was there. Of course, I was their man, and I was in charge. But the Admin person, Joan Clark, held a very narrow administrative approach to things, and so I had a bureaucratic struggle to get this through, but I got it. We opened a big cultural center in Budapest right next to the Russian information center. We got it and turned the inside into a modern, highly

impressionistic American thing. The Romanians went crazy, it's still operating. It's still drawing almost a thousand people a day. I call that the Jenkins Memorial Library.

This was a very successful program. I had somebody to go into Bratislava in Slovakia. The Slovaks were very antsy about this because they were the ones who were under Russian occupation, and we never were able to get them to agree. We owned the building, which is now the American embassy again. When I went in to inspect the building, as part of this, it was really kind of fun. I walked in the door and everything was cobwebbed, etc. right on the city square, and here's a great big photograph of Harry Truman. It had been closed down. That's where Claiborne Pell served.

Q: Yes, he was one of the young officers to open the place up.

JENKINS: That's right. Bratislava is only 45 minutes from Vienna. So those were the kinds of programs that I was able to do, and I had very good people, John Shirley in Warsaw, who subsequently became number three man in the agency, a top career guy; Ed Alexander, just fine officers. Again, thanks to Frank giving me a blank check.

Q: Did you have any problem as you went out on these programs...let's talk about the Soviet Union itself. In those days we would call it an empire, but it hadn't really penetrated our psyche that it really was an empire.

JENKINS: Well, it had penetrated the psyche of those of us who were dealing with it, but not the American public.

Q: Was there any disquiet on the part of Great Russians who were involved in our program? I'm talking about American Great Russians, about what we were doing because obviously we're trying to get to where it is today.

JENKINS: Precisely. Well, I guess the answer to that is probably yes. We didn't get a lot of flak because anything that we could do, was demonstrably anti-communist. The concern

of these people was overridingly to undermine, overcome the communist regime. In terms of the ethnic groups in the United States, the impact that they had on me in that five years when I was involved with USIA's activities in that part of the world, invariably was more of what we were doing. We tried to cut back because of budget pressures on some of the Voice programs, and I went after Slovenia, for example. The number of Slovenes who spoke nothing but Slovene was very small. But the Slovene-American community, including the Congressman from Minnesota, John Blatnik, who had been the liaison with Tito during the war, was so strong. Blatnik threatened to blow me out of the water if I didn't sustain the Slovene broadcasts. I did get him to agree to reduce it, and to do more English, but basically the pressure was always to have more language services as a demonstration of our support for the culture of these minority groups throughout central Europe. It was a resource rather than a problem.

Q: Did the other countries...we're talking about the BBC, DeutcheWelle, did you say, Okay, you've got Slovene, and we'll take Slovak, or something like that?

JENKINS: I proposed that to Blatnik, for example, on Slovenia, and he'd hear nothing of that. He wanted the American flag. So every six months I met with BBC, I went to DeutcheWelle twice in six years. Kol Israel, as I mentioned, I didn't deal with the French. I was aware of what they were doing, and I dealt with the French embassy, but I didn't have that intimate a relationship. We tried to dove-tail our activities with BBC vaguely. They were less constrained that we, and could broadcast about developments in the world with more subtlety and for that reason they had a better standing among the intelligentsia in Europe basically. We were under a lot of pressure to make sure that whatever we did had to do with U.S. foreign policy objectives. I didn't dispute that. I thought it was more or less the right thing to be doing. I thought the BBC frittered away a lot of time on cultural activities that had no political message. I wanted our cultural activities to demonstrate the vibrancy of our society, and not get into all this counter-culture stuff. The BBC was way out

in front on that. We subsequently were forced to do a certain amount of that because of the uproar in this country about Vietnam, but it was always a difficult balance.

Q: Well, BBC you might say was more dominated by, maybe left-wing is not the right term, in fact more liberal probably...

JENKINS: Far more liberal than the population, no question about it. But even there most of us could identify with what the BBC was doing intellectually. But politically it seemed to us not to be as shaped, as directed, and therefore not as justifiable in terms of taxpayers money going into it. But I got along very well with them, and they did some things extremely well, and we helped one another. There was never a sense of competition. We were all jammed equally by the Soviet authorities.

Q: How about the DeutcheWelle?

JENKINS: I thought the DeutcheWelle was jammed heavily. It was directed at the Volksdeutsch, the German emigre population in Russia and throughout the Soviet Union there were pockets where German settlers had gone in the 1800s mostly. They were not in a league, frankly, in terms of political sophistication. Some very good people there but...the objective of Soviet policy, we saw ourselves as shaping the Soviets, the Germans saw themselves as deflecting Soviet efforts to shape them. And throughout this period we all recognized that Germany was the most important battleground between east and west. But as a battleground, you have a different perspective on what you're trying to do. So it was a different function. Kol Israel was a very targeted special intriguing thing. Just generally speaking, the western broadcasts meshed together rather well. There was no conflict that I was aware of.

Q: How about the Japanese? Were they doing anything?

JENKINS: ...not doing anything to my knowledge, and I think I'm correct, they may be doing it now. In the first place there are no Japanese speakers in the Soviet Union. They

have I'm sure now an international broadcasting program in Japanese, and in English probably. I felt world-wide English was very marginal to what we were trying to do in that part of the world.

Q: Should we move now, you went to H, which is Congressional Relations.

JENKINS: That was a fluke...

Q: Can you give me the dates, I always like to get the dates.

JENKINS: Yes, in 1973. It happened that I had sort of run the course as Assistant Director of USIA after 5 years, and I was getting restless. My wife had died, and I wanted to be challenged more than I was at that time. The Director had become Jim Keogh. I felt very good about working with Jim, he's a splendid man, much more high-minded I might say, and less driven, than Frank Shakespeare. A very good manager, gentle, but strong, and open. He understood things, and he didn't come in with an agenda. Frank had arrived with a very strong internal compass. Jim came in more as an intellectually challenged, and an intrigued journalist, which is what he had been. He had been at Time. Very conservative, very solid, but much easier to work with than Frank. And he continued the support that Frank had initiated for my part of the world. Jim became a very close friend, and is to this day. He agreed, I had been there five years, it was time to move on, I had an excellent deputy in line to take over from me, John Shirley.

One day I was going over to lunch at the State Department, and I ran into Marshall Wright on the street corner. Marshall had studied Arabic when I studied Russian at FSI and we'd known each other a little bit. He had become Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations under Secretary Bill Rogers. He was looking for a deputy, and on the street he said, “What the hell are you doing now?” I said, “I'm looking around,” in fact I was going to see Fred Ikl# to see about becoming Fred's deputy at ACDA, Arms Control. I was very interested in the subject matter. I did have that interview with Fred. Marshall said, “Look, I'd like to talk to you, come see me after you see Fred.” I had a very long sort

of convoluted interview with Fred, a splendid academic and a very bright man, but he's very internalized, not easy to talk to, not easy to understand, and I didn't feel the chemistry was terribly good. I have great respect for Fred to this day, but we would not have had a swinging operation together. That's not his style, for one thing, although the subject matter certainly intrigued me, and always did.

So I went to see Marshall, and Marshall became very enthusiastic. I had been active with Congress at USIA, and had testified a lot, and had a lot of friends on the Hill. And, I had always cultivated the CODEL job. When I was abroad I always sought to be the CODEL man because I enjoyed, and found it stimulating to interact with these Congressmen when they're abroad. You get their full attention for two days, that's a big piece of their time. I built a lot of friendships that way. Some people I never wanted to see again. But on the whole the members of Congress were extremely good value, and worthwhile. I talked this way with Marshall. He stood up, he said, “Look, go no further, come with me.” We went down the hall and met Bill Rogers, the Secretary, and talked for about ten-fifteen minutes. Then Marshall took me over to the White House to meet Bill Timmons. And the next day offered me the job. Jim Keogh was very enthusiastic about it, and so I moved.

Q: You were there from when to when in Congressional Relations?

JENKINS: '73 to '78, five years.

Q: Could you put in context in the '73 period when you took over this job, what did Congressional Relations do in the State Department?

JENKINS: Well, under Marshall and me, we began to change H into an effective foreign policy instrument which was our interpretation of what it should be. Heretofore, and subsequently, it has been more or less a conveyor belt for Congressmen to lean on the State Department. It has been peopled by former staffers who came with an absolute

Congressional perspective, not a State Department perspective. We had the State Department perspective. So the belt ran the other way under us. That was the first thing.

Secondly, the issues of the day were intimidating, and so important, that we didn't have a lot of resistance from the front office to getting involved, and getting them involved.

Q: The front office?

JENKINS: Congress had intruded into foreign policy, as a result of Watergate and the collapse of Vietnam, increasingly into the day-to-day operations of foreign policy. The relationship between the Department and the Hill, became absolutely critical. And we were in the middle of it. I had a perception as to what (and I think my perception was right), Congressmen wanted, and would be effective with them, and that would further the interest of the foreign policy of the United States. Marshall agreed with me that Congressmen should (and generally preferred to) talk to experts, not former Hill staffers. There is a strong sense on the Hill, and it hasn't changed even with the recent revolution, of doctor-nurse. The doctor is the member, and the nurse is the staff, and you never climb that barrier entirely. Some staffers become Congressmen, but not many. As a career Foreign Service officer, and Marshall also a career Foreign Service officer, H became a different place. Larry Pezzulo, another FSO, joined the office, was perceived in Congress as professional.

I organized a series of groups, and meetings, etc., to bring in our ambassadors who were back on home leave, or the Assistant Secretary, almost always career people, not political appointees, because that's who these people want to hear from. So we were much better able to sell our position. We generated much more respect, and Congress didn't try to bully us. For example, if I took a political appointee, with no particular background in say Japanese affairs, to talk about Japan, Congress didn't regard us with any particular deference.

Q: Well, they knew where you came from.

JENKINS: But if I took Bill Sherman up, and they knew Bill had spent 20 years dealing with the Japanese, and was bilingual in the language, they immediately became very respectful of him, and his views were much more persuasive. I organized one thing with Dante Fascell, who was the then...

Q: Congressman from Florida.

JENKINS: ...who became the number two man at that time, subsequently became chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. We persuaded Dante that it would be worthwhile trying a program, the first Wednesday morning of every month to have a coffee hour from 7:30 or 8:00 to 9:00, in a hearing room. I would provide a current official on whatever subject was then on the front burner. But always career people. When we started out we'd get 12 or 15 members of Congress for an hour. That was a big accomplishment. By the time I finished, and we did this for about four years, we were drawing 100 members. I'd take up the ambassador just back from Sudan where we had just had a terrible incident, and these people would turn out in droves. No staffers, members only, they were not ashamed to ask dumb questions because their staff wasn't there. So we had a very free-flowing exchange, and as a result of that we had a real impact on Congressional attitudes toward our policy objectives.

Q: It's all very well to say, okay, we're only going to take career people, but you've got political appointees with big egos who maybe had been put in charge of East Asian or Middle East, or what have you. How did you deal with that?

JENKINS: I just didn't invite them, unless they were somebody who had great personal standing. Win Lord is a political appointee, but he has great knowledge of Asia and he's accepted as an Asian expert. If you had an Assistant Secretary who in fact was a former staffer on the Hill, like Eliot Abrams, this would not work.

Q: Could you avoid...

JENKINS: It was my program, I took who I wanted to take, and I had Henry's support absolutely on this.

Q: You're talking about Henry Kissinger.

JENKINS: Yes. And before that Bill Rogers, and even after that Vance—I stayed for about six months under Vance. I didn't get any pressure from them to take any specific people. As long as Fascell was happy, and the members were happy, and we got rave notices. I mean, the members would write notes to the Secretary commending ambassador so-and-so, or Joe so-and-so who is the deputy assistant secretary. I took a lot of DASs because they were all career people.

Q: DAS, Deputy Assistant Secretary. What you were doing was, you were taking away the political element.

JENKINS: That's right.

Q: I mean, administrations get involved with something. If you put the Assistant Secretary on you're going to get the party line, but if you have a professional Foreign Service officer who is dealing with it, it's at a different level.

JENKINS: Exactly, that's exactly right. And this was an extremely successful thing. We had some shoot-outs over nominations. Harry Shlaudeman was always controversial because of his presence in Chile when Allende was overthrown. There were some professional liberals in Congress who were trying to nail somebody to prove that we were responsible for the assassination of Allende (which I'm convinced we weren't). Harry is a very close friend of mine, we were classmates in the Foreign Service, and I've known him forever, a splendid guy. As a result of this, somewhere around 100 members of the House had a sense of a personal relationship with an officer on an issue which was of

interest to everybody. So if they had questions about what's going on in the Congo, for example, and I think it was John Reinhardt I took up on that issue, it may have been Bill Schaufele. Subsequently they would feel free to call Schaufele directly. That's effective communication. That's extremely effective. Instead of writing a letter to the Secretary and getting a letter back after its been cleared by 40 people, you had this informal dialogue. Nobody is clearing anything. The Congressman calls up, and said to Schaufele—this is theoretical—"Well, Bill, I've read what's happening down there, and it looks to me like we ought to stop supporting this son of a bitch, he's dribbling away all the resources we've sent, and he's a terrible fascist. What do you think? Give me your personal view." Well Schaufele, right off the top of his head, having met this Member before, would give him the personal view. The Member would then be equipped to argue and vote intelligently. And that's what they want. They want to look like they know what they're doing, because they really care. Most Congressmen are dead sincere, their interest in foreign policy is sincere, and they're intrigued by it. It's a very sexy subject on the Hill, and we should be able to, in the Department, to exploit this natural friendly interested organization. So instead of being at loggerheads all the time, on most of the issues we'd be running in the same direction.

Q: Would you run into bureaucratic unhappiness about this type of thing in the Department?

JENKINS: You know, I always rode very high above the water in the Department in dealing with bureaucracy. I always was sublimely confident that what I was doing was well received, and that therefore my colleagues in the State Department would be proud to be part of it. And generally speaking I found that to be the case. I found some political appointees who were jealous, and wanted to be in charge. Some of the bureau Assistant Secretaries wanted to run their own program. That's a very difficult line for H always. Do you permit an Assistant Secretary for Middle Eastern Affairs to go up on the Hill and develop his own contacts? Or do you try and control it and make it all go through H? Obviously for purposes of making sure that American policy priorities are being accurately reflected, coordination is extremely important. But the way to coordinate is not to try

to lay down an edict and say, you can't do this, I'll do it, or, you'll only do it with me. What I did was to persuade each bureau to assign a man as special assistant to the Assistant Secretary who became my liaison in EB, for example, or EUR. They came to my staff meetings once a week. I trained those guys, I seduced them into recognizing the importance of Congressional Relations, and sensitized them to it. So that they became my voice in the EB meeting. I would frequently go to the bureau staff meetings and brief on what was happening. But I always had this one person who was the EB man for H in the meetings reporting on what we were doing, and bringing them up to date. As a consequence I was able to overcome this artificial bureaucratic division. And everybody found H extremely responsive to the policy issues they cared about, not the bureaucratic control concept. And that's what I tried to create, and I think it was successful.

Q: I would think the bureaucratic control would show up, the telephone, the briefing, this is great because you really get the message across. As soon as something gets on paper, it goes through that horrible process of everybody gets a crack at it.

JENKINS: Well, that's true, but again because I had such a good intimate working relationship with the bureaus, and remember I was of them, I was an FSO. I came out of EUR, and I had served in ARA, and EA, and they all knew me, they all recognized that I was one of them. I wasn't some former Congressional staffer or White House staffer trying to tell them “how to suck eggs.” When something went onto paper, and I signed everything that went to the Hill from the Department—it was signed either by me or for a brief period Linwood Holton who was the Assistant Secretary (I was his deputy), and then Bob McCloskey who was also the titular Assistant Secretary, when he was there, signed.

Q: But he was mainly a spokesman wasn't he?

JENKINS: Yes, he was more spokesman, and then he went off as ambassador to Greece. Of the five years that I was there, I was the Acting Assistant Secretary for about three and a half years. And everybody in the building regarded me as the sort of constant H, a

fixture. And that wasn't because I was outstanding, it was because I couldn't go overseas. My wife had died and I was raising my children, so I stayed in Washington longer than I normally would have as a Foreign Service officer. But that continuity was very valuable in trying to lay the groundwork for this kind of an appreciation, I think, and everybody that I know has told me this over and over again, that when we ran H, Wright, McCloskey and me (and we had Larry Pezzulo and Sam Goldberg), we were all career people. We had a few political appointees, Bill Richardson interestingly enough, currently a Congressman from New Mexico, a wonderful guy, was a political appointee. He was sent to me, from all things, by the Republican Study Group. He's now a Democratic Congressman. Bill is a very bright man. He's a Fletcher graduate, and of course he's bilingual. His mother was Mexican, his father was an American. He has a lovely attractive blond wife, and they're a very good Congress team. I recognized immediately that Bill was a weapon for us in ARA. When I sent him off to Mexico as part of the advance team for Kissinger's first visit to Mexico, he was an instant hit. He knew everybody in Mexico. He arranged all the programs, and ended up accompanying Henry every place. And it put him on the map, and it demonstrated to Henry again that, you know, “I can trust H.” They have good people. But he was the only political appointee that I remember, everybody else was Foreign Service when I was there. Now that has totally gone the other way. It began under Carter when they brought in people from Eagleton's office to run it, Brian Atwood was one, Doug Bennet was another. They are very smart guys. They have since become members of the foreign policy establishment, but they came in without the Department's perspective. They were not trusted within the Department by career people, and so the whole thing began to break down. They began to fill up the office with appointees. Now it's Barbara Wikulski, former AA, who is Assistant Secretary and practically no FSOs. I think they've lost it. And they're now in charge of nominations and making sure the Secretary is happy, which is what H had historically had been. We had turned it into a policy instrument.

Q: What were some of the major areas where Congress and State Department were going in different directions? If you can give any examples of how H and you operated.

JENKINS: Let me explain the context. This was the time of the collapse in Vietnam. Kissinger had just come over from the NSC. It was the time of Watergate. The President resigned while we were there. The Congress in this period was increasingly assertive in foreign policy, trying to take over everything, trying to turn everything upside down. They were very hostile to military assistance, for example. One of our major jobs was to try and keep the pipeline to Vietnam open long enough so that we could withdraw with some degree of satisfaction. And we worked very hard on that. We didn't succeed, but how do you measure success. The pipeline was kept open longer than if we hadn't been working on it. Whether I felt it was right or wrong, that was the policy (I also happened to think it was right at the time).

We had the SALT agreement with the Soviet Union, which was very contentious. We had the Panama Canal treaty which was extremely contentious. We had our relationship with Chile which was very contentious. Relations with China. All of these things were big issues. The Congress was floundering around. They didn't really have a direction on these issues. Congress, in the first place, is not a homogeneous organization. It's 535 individual future potential Presidents of the United States, and they all have their own agenda and perspective. So the challenge was always to bring together a coalition of supporters to preserve the administration's policy position. And we were more or less successful. When you think back to the Watergate era, when everything in the administration was being blown apart, nobody really ever laid a glove on foreign policy, or Henry Kissinger. We got pushed out of Vietnam, but we were trying to get out of Vietnam anyhow. That wasn't really a difference. The difference was timing. We had a majority in favor of the Panama Canal treaty, and it won eventually, with bipartisan support by Presidents of both parties, from four administrations. SALT was another matter of the same kind. The whole issue of detente with the Soviet Union through the Brezhnev era well after the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Q: And before the invasion of Afghanistan in '79.

JENKINS: That's right. It was never a situation where the administration wanted this, and Congress was opposed to it. Congress was never unified, the administration's position at that point wasn't all that clear frequently anyhow. We were trying to stay on top of a collapsing situation, and maintain the dignity and respect and influence of the United States, in spite of an historically unprecedented political crisis. I think Henry Kissinger's State Department succeeded, and I was proud to be a part of that. I found Henry a tremendous Secretary. One of the things when you're doing Congressional Relations is you've got to have somebody they care about. I would not want to be doing Congressional Relations for Warren Christopher. I know Warren Christopher. He was the deputy when I was there for eight months. I've great respect for his intellectual capacity, his ability to analyze and focus and negotiate. But he's a lousy proponent, ineffective, not because he doesn't try but he just can't do it. It's not there chemically. Kissinger was great theater. Everybody on the Hill wanted Henry for their hearing. And anytime I would invite a group of Congressmen for breakfast with Henry Kissinger, they'd all come. Now if you invite people for breakfast with Warren Christopher, I imagine they're too busy. It's a totally different ball game. So I realize I was blessed in having Henry as a product. Henry appreciated, next to the press, he considered the Congress the most important instrument that he had. And he worked it very hard, and very well, very intelligently. E.g., I introduced him to Russell Long. Russell Long was chairman of the Finance Committee, normally the object of the Treasury Department. Henry immediately recognized that Russell Long was a power house, a real “baron,” and he liked him. He's a scoundrel, like Henry is a scoundrel. The chemistry was terrific between the two of them. I brought them together. I got Henry up to testify before his committee on an international economic issue. Long liked him a lot, was very grateful. Subsequently I got Long down to the Department for breakfast with Henry two or three times. They worked together extremely well, and he was a great ally. Henry was also very close to Javits, and Humphrey.

Q: Javits was a Republican senator.

JENKINS: And Ted Kennedy liked him a lot, they had a good relationship. There wasn't a single member of Congress that I can think of, with a few exceptions, who really had it in for Henry. They all enjoyed his company. Senator Jackson was a problem because of Richard Perle...

Q: This is Scoop Jackson, of Washington.

JENKINS: The chemistry was bad there. It was bad because Jackson was ponderous, very heavy handed, absolutely hostile to any collaboration with the Russians. He did not accept the idea of subverting Soviet hegemony by expanding contact, and increasing American influence to the maximum degree. He wanted isolation, cut off relations with the Russians. And that was driven by Richard Perle, and Dickie Fosdick, who's a charming woman, a good friend for whom I have great respect but I think is dead wrong, a negative force, motives were very high-minded, but I thought dead wrong. Eliot Abrams was just sort of the errand boy in that office with Dickie Fosdick at that time. And they were driving Jackson, persuading him to be very hostile. And Henry had a very contentious relationship with Jackson, and I was very much involved in the middle of that at all times. We did get MFN for Romania, because the Romanians came through on Jewish immigration, and that was a big item. Jackson wanted to be President, and he thought he was going to get there with Jewish financing in this country. He was absolutely a slave to Israeli positions, in my judgment. Richard was a big part of that. That was, I'd say, one of the few people who really had it in for Henry. Doc Morgan, Clem Zablocki, Dante Fascell, all of the senior Democrats in this Republican administration had great affection and respect for Kissinger, trusted him. Wayne Hayes was a power house on that committee. He was in charge of the State Department authorization bill, and was a big force within Congress. As chairman of the administration committee he controlled all the perks. I dealt with Hayes a lot.

A typical little anecdote on how you get things done: Hayes' secretary called me and said that it was his birthday, and there was going to be a little fund raiser for him, but it was cast as a birthday party in the hearing room. Doc Morgan, Zablocki, and Hayes all

wondered whether there was any chance the Secretary could show up, even though it was a Democratic function, etc. I immediately saw this as an opportunity. If we could get Hayes really in the traces for us, it would be a big thing. He'd been difficult, nice to me but he didn't like the Department too much. So I wrote a memo to Henry. Linwood Holton was then the Assistant Secretary and he was out of the country for a week. In the memo I reported the telephone conversation, my recommendation was that this is too good an opportunity to miss. For a short appearance we will get influence with Hayes which I think would be of value to us down the line on issue after issue. Approve - Disapprove, sent it up, it came back approved, set it up, take me up there. Holton returned before it happened, I mean after the memo but before the event. I had it on his desk as things that had happened while he was away. He blew up. He said, “You can't do this. You can't send a Republican Secretary of State up to a Democratic fund raiser.” I said, “It's being cast as a birthday party, and Henry clearly has agreed with this. He's not a dumb man, he understands this. And I think you're wrong.” He said, “Well, I'm going up there and turn this around.” So he grabbed the paper and walked up to Henry's office, and came back chest fallen. Henry was going to go. Holton did not like me for that. But I took Henry up there. He got up on the piano bench in front of about 150 Democratic Congressmen and Senators, Humphrey was there, and Tip O'Neill, the whole Democratic establishment was there, and Henry stood up and said, “Look, I'm here as an outsider in this party, but I want to put on the record right now my appreciation for the fact that Wayne Hayes is one of the great parliamentary diplomats in the history of our country, and I tip my hat to you.” And he left.

The next morning Hayes got on the phone, “Jenkins, I don't know how you did that, but I want you to know that anything the Secretary of State wants from here on out, you've got me working for it,” and hung up. So I thought, that's great, that's what we expected. I told Henry and he was very pleased. Six weeks went by, and all of a sudden this tremendous wave of hostility toward any military involvement in anything hit the military assistance legislation. The amendment was introduced to strip out all of the financial support for Korea, military assistance, and bring our troops home. And it was rolling through the

House. It looked like we were going to lose this big. Phil Habib was the Deputy Assistant Secretary, and Phil was screaming, what are we going to do? I took him up there and everybody was just shaking their heads, etc. We worked it as hard as we could and we got it down to about 15 members who were swing votes. And if we could get 12 of those 15, we could block this amendment, but it looked like it was a very long shot. And I reported this. Henry had a staff meeting every morning at 7:30, I would go to most of the, if McCloskey wasn't there I always went. I was reporting on this on a daily basis. Everybody was very concerned. It looked like we were going to lose something which strategically would have been of historic significance. So I said in one of these meetings, “It looks to me, Mr. Secretary, that this is an opportunity to cash in the Wayne Hayes card. So if you agree, and Phil, I know you agree, I'd like to go up and talk to Wayne about this. We've got this list of 15 people.” So I went up to see Wayne, I walked in and he said, “Oh, good to see you. I told you, and I want you to know I mean it.” I said, “Well, I'm here to cash that chip in. I realize that what we're asking is maybe impossible but here's the issue.” I told him where the legislation stood, he was familiar with it. He said, “I worried about that,” he was very much of a hard liner basically which helped our position on this one. He said, “Let me see that list.” So he looked down the list, he just went down checking off names, and at the end of it he looked up at me and said, “You go back and tell Henry Kissinger that these sons of bitches will vote with him on this issue, or they won't park within 12 miles of the capital building.” We got 12 out of 15 and we won the vote. Now that's Congressional influence.

Q: And, of course, had we pulled out of there, we could have started a war.

JENKINS: Oh, no question.

Q: Having served not too long thereafter in Korea, if we'd pulled our troops out of there, this was not a minor issue. We're talking about a big war.

JENKINS: Well, it's a dramatic illustration of how Congressional relations should work, to my mind. And I was thrilled that Kissinger had this sense. He was consistently outstanding on the Hill, and everybody wanted him all the time.

Q: You've talked about how you used our FSOs with Congress. How did you view, and how did you work with the staff of Congress? This was a period where the staff was beginning to basically get too big for its britches, and was often considered to be running the show. We're talking about the Congressional staff.

JENKINS: That still goes on to a certain extent. It's not as simple as that, and that's not inaccurate. A part of knowing how to work the Hill was knowing who the important staffers are. Just as knowing who the important members are. There are probably 300 of the 535 members of the Congress and the Senate who aren't worth talking to on foreign policy issues. But the others are very important, and then when you talk to them you have to analyze each one, and his staff, and who on his staff is important. I had a working relationship with Scott Cohen, who was Chuck Percy's right-hand man, chief of staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Scott is a very good friend of mine, and I befriended Scott, was open with him, shared things with him, we socialized together. I did that with probably 20 people up there, people who remain friends of mine. Marion Carnecki in the House, and I did it irrespective of party. I had Republican friends, and Democratic friends, and I trained our FSOs to recognize that it is important to identify who the real initiator of an idea is, and to focus in on him irrespective of whether it's the member or the staff. To recognize that the staff is an incredibly important part of this process. And I did that with Kissinger. I had two or three beer hours for staffers with Kissinger. They were thrilled out of their skins. And Henry recognized this, he had that sense, and he trusted me. When I would bring in 15 staffers and say to him, “You can be candid with these people.” He'd say, “I don't trust them, they will go to the newspapers.” I said, “Look, you'll go to the newspapers before they do, and you have much better access. There's no way they're going to distort the issue that way, and furthermore the main interest they have is in being

with you, seeing you, listening to you, not trying to screw you." And he took it, and he went with it.

We were caught up on the Cyprus issue with Brademas and Sarbanes, I failed there. It was case in point where I misread something. Both John Brademas and Sarbanes are very well educated. Sarbanes, John, of course, became president of NYU among other things, and was a Harvard graduate. And I thought the two of them, and Henry with his academic background, would have a lot of good chemistry together, and they did until we got on the issue of Cyprus. It was a total non-conversation, they went ballistic. And Henry was furious with me.

Q: Well, we're talking about the ethnic card there. Greek descent...some are very good friends, and I served four years in Athens. There's no rationality, and this was with Greek-Americans.

JENKINS: No, none. They're more Greek than the Greeks, and AHEPA just killed us on the Cyprus issue. That was an ethnic organization where we really struck out. It didn't affect me in terms of my Soviet activities, or activities dealing with the Soviets, but it was critical in the H job where we were trying to contain the Cyprus issue and get military assistance into Turkey which at that point was probably the most valuable single military ally we had in NATO. They were getting very short shift in terms of military assistance because the Greek-American community didn't want them to get anything. So that was a negative impact, and of course, the Israeli issue was always very tough too.

Q: Can you talk a little about the Israelis? We're talking about the Jewish lobby.

JENKINS: I was involved in the Jackson-Vanik amendment. It's one I lost but I had never thought I could win. The White House was confident that they were going to be able to pull this off. There was a man named Peter...but that's not right, who was the director of international economic policy on the White House staff, a very cocky guy, and he was dead wrong on this reading of Congress usually. He found a few token members in

Congress, and Max Fisher from Detroit who is sort of the head of the Jewish community in Detroit, who was a Republican, and a few others who all assured them that they could blunt the Jackson-Vanik amendment.

Q: Could you explain what the Jackson-Vanik amendment was?

JENKINS: The Jackson-Vanik amendment was an effort by some key staffers, most notably Richard Perle, and Charlie Vanik's staffer Mark Talisman, who drafted this thing which made an economic relationship, including trade, MFN most notably, dependent upon the immigration practices of the recipient country. It was directed specifically at the Soviets, trying to force the Soviets to open up and permit Soviet Jewry to flee to Israel, not the United States, but to Israel, which is one of the things that gave me a problem with it. They were able to mobilize the Jewish community in this country, all the temples across the country had big signs out in front: Save Soviet Jewry. And because the Jewish community is highly political, and puts its money where its mouth is on politics like no other ethnic group in this country they were able to influence Congress, like the NRA does. Congress was scared to death of these organizations.

Q: The NRA is the National Rifle Association.

JENKINS: What they did successfully was mobilize support for the Jackson-Vanik amendment which was a direct insult to the Soviets. In the meantime Henry had been negotiating with Dobrynin and Gromyko to bring about a more liberal policy. Some 64,000 Jews left the Soviet Union the year before Jackson-Vanik was passed. The year after it passed, it went down to 200. I was arguing that this was not going to help Soviet Jewry, it might make Jews in the United States feel like they'd done something, but it was not going to really help Jews in the Soviet Union. It was going to be counterproductive. I got no place because the lobby was so powerful, and I told Henry, “We're going to lose this.” He was very upset about it, had a lot of meetings with Jackson, but we couldn't get anyplace. Jackson was running for President and he was dependent upon Jewish financial support

which he saw as his key to being President. So it was a very bad issue. We were running against the tide, we were weakened because of Watergate, Vietnam, and all these other things. We did not have as much prestige as we would have had otherwise. The President had zero prestige on this issue. And we got killed.

The ExIm Bank's ability to make loans to the Soviet Union as part of the detente process, which was underway at that time, was clipped because there was a Stevenson amendment that was added. Adlai Stevenson sponsored it, which Perle engineered, which not only said, you couldn't get MFN, but you also couldn't get any more than $400 million in ExIm Bank loan guarantees. This shut off any possibility of significant American investment in the Soviet Union, which we were promoting because we thought if we could get consumer industries going in there, we're going to undermine the Soviet regime. It's the same thing we were doing at USIA.

The President put Bill Simon in charge of the East-West Trade, or Economic, Task Force, Simon being the Secretary of Treasury, a very cocky guy, very smart, but very cocky. Kissinger always regarded Simon as an upstart. He had no business getting into relations with the Soviet Union. Simon would call a Cabinet level meeting, and Henry would send me as a deliberate insult. I would go to the meeting, and here would be Secretary Simon in the chair at the head this table in his little private dining room; Jerry Parsky, his staff aide who was an Under Secretary sitting next to him; George Shultz from Labor; and Earl Butz from Agriculture; and half a dozen other Cabinet members, and I'd walk in the door and Simon would say obtusely so everybody could hear, “Who's that guy?” Parsky would say, “That's Kempton Jenkins, he's Kissinger's representative.” “What's he do?” “He's the Acting Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations. He's a Russian expert.” Christ! Simon would go purple he'd be so upset. Well, I'd sit there quietly while these fellows started out the conversation, and within ten minutes they were asking questions about what the lay of the land in Congress was on this issue, and, of course, I was the only one in the room that knew anything about it. I did all the talking by the end of the meeting. I'd have to go back and tell Henry, and he would laugh like hell. And Simon would send a

note over saying, “I will not accept anything other than principals.” And so it was a very confrontational relationship, Henry had with Simon.

But this was an issue that I was the point man on, Eagleburger got involved in this, he was then Henry's Special Assistant, before he moved up to other things. That was an issue where we took a beating. But it was not a product of Watergate so much as it was the ethnic lobby.

Q: When you run across the ethnic thing, at this point we're talking about the Greek and the Jewish lobby.

JENKINS: That's right, and they are really serious.

Q: Wait until we get to the Korean lobby some day.

JENKINS: Well, we're not there yet, it will take another 20 years probably.

Q: It'll come.

JENKINS: Those are challenges for American Presidents, and Secretaries of State. You have to work with them, you have to deal with it, you have to be responsive to it, because it's sincere, it's not fictitious. It just troubles me always because it wasn't the U.S. national interest they were concerned about, it was Israel's national interest, or Greece's national interests. And I felt that while those national interests were allied to ours, they needed to be subordinate, not driving. I think I maintained a reasonably good dialogue. I always had good access to the Israeli lobby.

Steve Bryen, who was a colleague of Perle's, was Cliff Case's man on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. One incident that occurred was very interesting where we all worked together. We were trying to sell Jordan some Hawk missiles, and of course the Israeli lobby didn't want that because they didn't want any Hawk missiles pointed at Israel that could be used against Israeli forces in the event of another Arab-Israeli war. And yet, the

Jordanians had a legitimate reason, we were trying to wean Jordan into our camp on that old part of the world, and with some success. And King Hussein was a hero then, as he is today, in his ability to survive. So we went back and forth, and Case was killing us in the committee on this thing, and I finally went to Steve and I said, “Steve, you know we've got to be able to work this out. You're not really afraid of the Jordanians with or without Hawks. It's the Syrians and the Egyptians you're worried about, right?” “Why can't we work something out here?” He said, “Well, maybe we can.” So Steve and I worked out this gimmick, that we'd sell the Hawks, but the Hawks had to be emplaced in concrete pointing towards Syria, so they couldn't be turned around. They had fixed launching pads. And it worked. We got the damned thing through. Kissinger saw the wisdom of this. He stopped by and chatted with Case privately on it, and we got the bill through. And that's the kind of Congressional relations which is constructive. I still consider Steve a friend of mine. He's outrageous in terms of his devotion to Israel, I think. But he's a nice guy, I like him. He gets pleasure out of the game, as Richard Perle did.

Q: You moved into the Carter administration in '77 for what, about six months?

JENKINS: Yes. When Ford lost the election, Habib called me in and said, “Look, they're not going to let you stay.” And I'd been Acting Assistant Secretary at this point, and in fact Henry was getting ready to make me Assistant Secretary, that was the deal. Eagleburger called me in, and said, “Henry will make you Assistant Secretary, but you have to take this woman that we're trying to place as your deputy.” Her name was Martha Taft. She's a splendid woman. I had never met her. He said, “I want you to talk to her.” So we chatted for about an hour, and I came away convinced that she'd be terrific. And I told Larry, he said, “Okay, that's the deal. You take Martha. You like her, you agree she's good, you'll be the Assistant Secretary.” Well, along comes the election, and Ford loses the election. Henry said, “I don't want to make you Assistant Secretary because if I do you're going to be kicked out, if you stay as Acting Assistant Secretary, when they come in you'll still be there, and if that's in the national interest, you stay.” And Habib called me and said, “Look, you ought to get out of there. You're never going to get the top job.” Clem Zablocki said, “I

will make you Assistant Secretary in the Democratic administration." I had a lot of support in both Houses. Gale McGee in the Senate. Phil said, "They can't do it. They may think they can, but they can't. Be realistic, get out. Take your embassy now, and go." He said, "How would you like to go to Bangkok? You've served in Bangkok." Well, my wife had been dead at this point three-five years, and my children were all in a school. I had met a widow whom I subsequently married, and it was just the wrong time to leave town. It was too important to bring our families together, etc. So I said, "I'll stay and take my chances." He said, "You're making a mistake, if you don't like Bangkok, we'll give you something else. How would you like Hungary?" I look back on it and I'm really sorry I didn't take it, in a way, but in terms of the family it was clearly the right thing to do. I didn't have a choice. It was the right thing to do.

So I stayed. The last week Henry was there at my suggestion, we organized a party for him on the eighth floor, we invited the whole Congress to come. They damned near all came. It was a fabulous party, a big success. Henry honored me. He had Lucy and I go down to his office on the seventh floor, and with Nancy we rode up on the elevator with him, and we got off into the crowd together, we set up the receiving line, I stood in the line next to Henry. It was his sort of payoff. And on the way up he said in the elevator to Lucy, "You know it's hard for me to say anything good about a Foreign Service officer, but at least you get somebody who is loyal and knows what he's doing, and on balance your husband has been a splendid asset." That was big. And then we got out and had this terrific party.

Well, when Vance and Christopher came in with the Carter administration, Doug Bennet was named as the Assistant Secretary to be, but it took almost eight months for him to get through the process. The Carter White House was like this one, really inefficient on terms of clearances, etc. So I was acting with Brian Atwood, and Bennet waiting in the wings with Bob Beckel. All staffers. When I told them about this big party that we'd had for Henry, they said, "Let's have one for Vance." So we organized the party for Vance, and I found out what the calendar was and said, "Don't do it on Tuesday evening because

they're going to have a 5:00 meeting of the new Democratic caucus, and I was told that's when the Secretary is available, that's when the party will be. They'll come." Well we got four or five members who showed up, a bunch of staffers whom I had invited at the last minute, and the party was a bust. That was the beginning. It never really got on track. I was out of synch with Christopher on human rights. He also kept volunteering, and Les Gelb was pushing for a ceiling of $10 billion on arms sales around the world. And I kept saying, "Don't do that. You've got the Israelis, you've got NATO, you've got ANZUS, and you're just going to create problems for yourself when the needs arise in the future." Then, of course, the needs did arise, and we did have problems, and I was right.

Carter went to Saudi Arabia, and he fell in love with the Sheik and promised him the latest F-5s, a fighter aircraft, and of course the Saudis were incapable of flying or maintaining them, but that's what the Sheik asked for, and Carter said yes. He came back and they introduced the legislation. I took some readings, and got together with Gelb and said, "This is going to get killed. The Israeli lobby will never tolerate this. They have to be one generation behind where the Israelis are. That's the tradition, and that's the way its got to be, and if you try anything else, you're going to lose, and in the process you'll generate a lot of criticism of the Saudi government." He said, "Let's go in and see Vance." I made this pitch, and Vance looked at me with an icy stare and he said, "You're fighting the problem." I said, "I don't think I understand what you mean Mr. Secretary." He said, "The President made a commitment to the head of another state to produce these aircraft. Our job is to get it done." And I said, "My job isn't to get it done, my job is to come back and tell you, suggest that you tell the President, that was a mistake, and there's a way around this. Offer F-4s, not F-5s, and with a lot of training an F-5 is ten years down the road, and that way you'll avoid this problem." Well, Vance was outraged at my attitude, and so they put it through, and it was rejected. And in the process our relationship with Saudi Arabia went downhill, because of the Congressional criticism during the ill-fated process. Doug Bennet and the Secretary were working very hard against elitism. I was a symbol of the old Foreign Service elite attitude.

Q: There's a problem. This is on tape, but you dress and you look like a member of the eastern establishment.

JENKINS: Well, you know, I went to Bowling Green in Ohio, and I lived all over the country, and I'll take my hat off to no one in terms of my being a representative American.

Q: Actually, Cyrus Vance was...

JENKINS: ...the same thing.

Q: Well, Cyrus Vance went to...I happen to know because he went to the same prep school I went to..

JENKINS: He's a hell of a lot more eastern establishment, no question about it. Carter came in with this concept which Clinton had taken several steps further. That we're going to look like the American people, and we're going to be reflective, etc., and we're going to get rid of elitism. So I was out of synch.

I'll never forget the first week the new administration was in office. Carter came around to the State Department. He visited all the departments, and he stood up and made his little speech to about a thousand people in the Loy Henderson auditorium. And among other things he said that we're going to end all this elitism, we're going to have a real representative Foreign Service and State Department, etc. And on the stage behind him he had assembled all the Assistant Secretaries. Well, I was the Acting Assistant Secretary for H, so I was there. We had a black woman who ran Passports and Consular Affairs, Barbara Watson, who was out of town. So her deputy, a white male, was there. We had another one, Patsy Mink, who did Science and Technology. She was out of town, so her deputy was there, who was a white male. The net result of this was, there were twelve senior staff in the State Department on the stage, and it was 100% white males. So Carter makes this statement with Vance and Christopher on the stage with him, and he ends, the first question in the front row a black man stands up and said, “Mr. President, I'd like

you to turn around, and look at the senior staff in the State Department." We sat there, and we all... He did turn, and I knew then—they put in place a quota system, every bureau was going to have at least one minority, and they created jobs to put people into it, Equal Opportunity, quadrupled its staff. Pat Derian created the new office of Human Rights. Pat is a sweet woman, married to a wonderful guy, but she had no more background in foreign policy than the man in the moon. I was out of step. I lasted about six or seven months.

I went to the Senior Seminar, Chris Van Hollen let me in at the last minute. I had been lecturing to the Senior Seminar for ten years, I was much too old. But I had a great year, and then at the end of that I had two opportunities: one to go over to CIA, Frank Carlucci was an old pal of mine, and he called me and said, "I want you to come over and run Congressional Relations for the agency," which was a very interesting time to be doing it. And I was also offered a job at Commerce as DAS for East-West Trade. And I thought, you know, I'm going to get out of the Service, I'm fed up with this. I was supposed to be ambassador to Romania, that was given to Rudy Aggrey. And then I was supposed to be ambassador to East Berlin, and that went to Dave Bolen, both black officers, very fine guys, but they weren't at my level, and they didn't have my experience in the area. And Carter had frozen the executive pay raise, so I'd been sitting there at the top of my grade for seven years with no pay increase. Inflation at that point running at 18%, and I decided to hell with it.

So I took the Commerce job knowing it would offer me greater opportunities, which it did. I was there for one year, and Armco Steel Company hired me away, tripled my salary, and I spent ten years as Washington Vice President for Armco, before I retired there.

In the Commerce job I had a wonderful time, I traveled around; led the delegation to China that negotiated the first trade agreement; organized the meetings with the U.S.-Soviet Trade Commission; and the Polish Trade Commission; took Juanita Kreps to China, Bucharest, and Moscow. We did a lot, fighting with Richard Perle all the time over the question of trade with the Soviet Union. I was pushing for non-strategic trade as a way

of undermining and creating consumerism. And Perle was trying to conduct economic warfare, and he had his allies at the Defense Department, and we didn't get very far. But it was an interesting time. Juanita was heroic and stood up to Defense and others.

Q: Juanita Kreps was...

JENKINS: The Secretary of Commerce, and a splendid woman. But I left with no regrets. I must say the style in which the Department of State used to muster you out, and I gather it's somewhat but not a lot better now, there was no ceremony. I mean this was 30 years I'd been in the Foreign Service, and I'd been in senior jobs, DAS jobs, for ten years, the last ten years I was in the Service. And my mustering out consisted of getting, in the mail, a plastic plaque with the Department's seal on it. It was broken when received. That was my retirement.

Q: I've told the story, I don't think its apocryphal. I think it's true, of one of our most distinguished ambassadors who had been in a series of very difficult spots, and was going through the processing out, and as he walked out the door, all of a sudden somebody came running after him, "Mr. Ambassador, Mr. Ambassador," and he thought, "Ah, this is it." And somebody said, "You forgot to turn in your badge."

JENKINS: That's typical.

Q: Well, your satisfaction comes from what you've done.

JENKINS: That's right.

Q: It's not very good.

JENKINS: You know, I had 30 years in the most historically sensitive and significant years in the history of our country. And during that time I had an incredible array of experiences, and the last ten years in very responsible policy level jobs. There wasn't anything I could have done that would have been more satisfying, more fun, more challenging, and I

cherish every moment of it. I especially cherish my relationships with what I think is the finest band of qualified, brilliant, dedicated men and women in this country. I think the Foreign Service Officer Corps today remains the most competitive, the most elite, the most competent, of any diplomatic service in the world, by far. And I am absolutely as proud as punch for having been a part of it. And I wouldn't do it any differently.

Q: Well, why don't we end there.

End of interview